Volume 1 • Issue 9 • August 1996

# PS Extreme

THE PLAYER'S UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE PLAYSTATION

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11 GAMES REVIEWED INCLUDING JUMPING FLASH 2 NAMCO MUSEUM BUST-A-MOVE 2 AND ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

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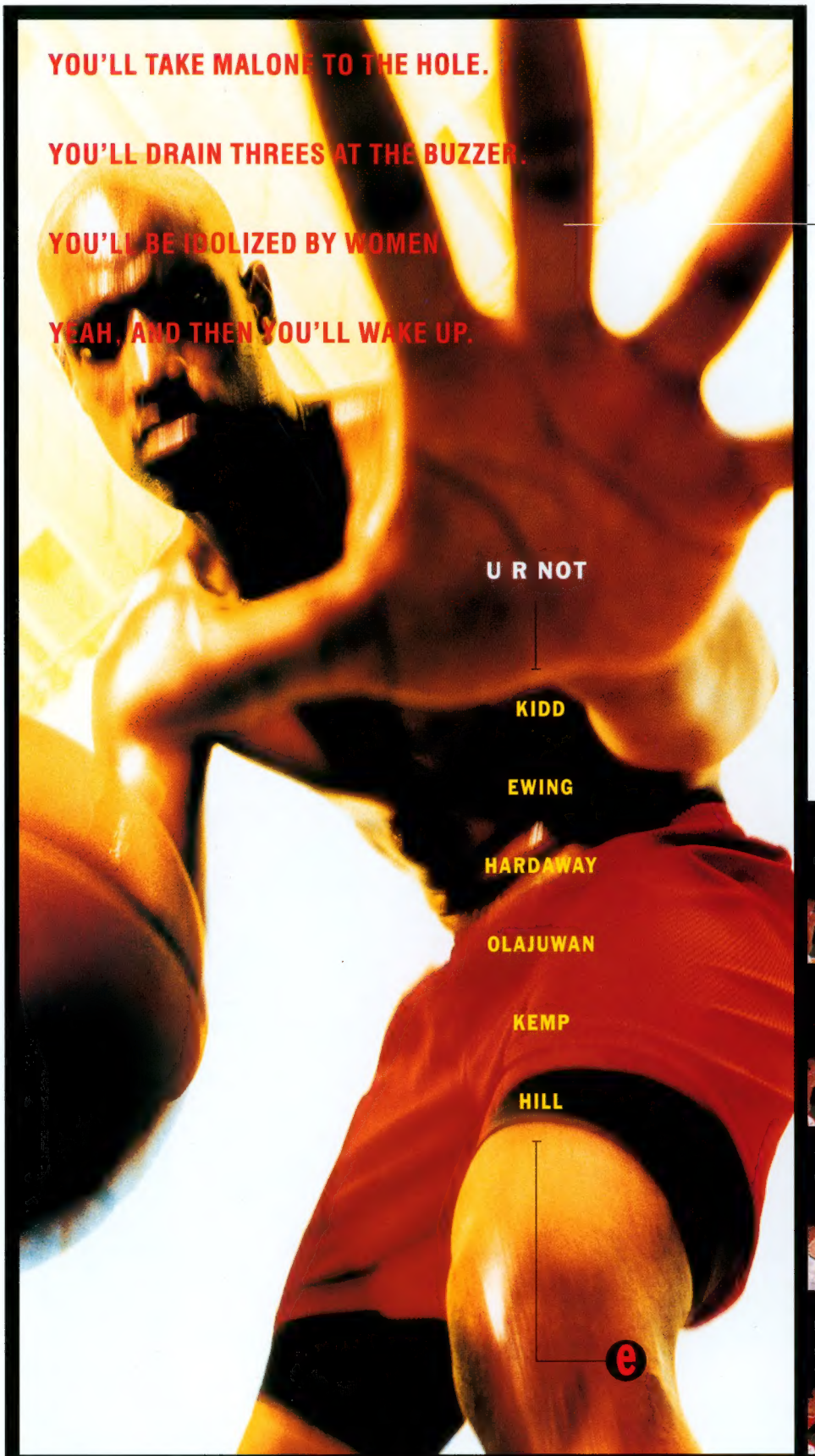


NBA Shoot Out

Okay, rookie. Here's all the 3-D realism, other wannabees–uh, the basketball game

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VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 9
AUGUST, 1996

## IN THE EXTREME

EXNEWS: Page 10
Crystal D ... R.I.P., some cool snow boarding action, sales stuff and more.

EXECUTE: Page 12
Fade to Black walkthrough part 1, cool codes for Bust-a-Move 2, PO'ed, Return Fire, Magic Carpet, V-Tennis and more.

EXCESSORY: Page 14
The first installment of our new accessories section debuts this month.

EXCLUSIVE: Page 16
An inside look at Presto Studio's Journeyman Project: Pegasus Prime.

EXPECTING: Page 18
Hey Earl, whad'ya know? We've got sixteen of the hottest games previewed this month.

EXTREME: Page 26
This month we feature ten pages of exhaustive coverage on Sony's Crash Bandicoot. You won't believe your eyes.

EXRATED: Page 36
Adidas Power Soccer, Namco Museum, Bust-a-Move 2, V-Tennis, Horned Owl, Olympic Soccer, Jumping Flash 2, etc., etc.

EXPORT: Page 58
Motortoon Grand Prix 2, straight from Japan to the pages of PS*Extreme*.

## SO, DAVE...

EDITORIAL

# TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

Our 9th issue of PS*Extreme* focuses on Sony's "Crash Bandicoot" — and with good reason. As you will read in our special 10 page edition of "Extreme", there is a great story to tell, both on the creation of the product (via our interview with Universal Interactive's Mark Cerny and Naughty Dog's Jason Rubin) and the marketing of the game. What we have come away with, both from the interview and our extended time playing the alpha version of the game (to date, I have probably logged 50-60 hours of play time on Crash), is that Sony has a very special product on their hands and that the next generation of game playing will finally be ushered into the mass market. And they know it ... this fall, you won't be able to open a gaming magazine or watch TV without seeing Crash's mug looking back at you. I guarantee that you won't be able to put down your control pad!

In other news, Sony recently announced that "ESPN Extreme Games" (the sequel, 2 Xtreme, will be shipping this fall) is now the best-selling PlayStation game, world-wide. While this news may surprise many, in the American press, where the game received a luke-warm greeting when it was introduced last September (with the notable exception of this magazine, which picked Extreme Games to be the cover feature of our premiere issue and where the game continues to rank among our all-time top 10 Gold games), the game has international appeal — selling almost as well in Japan as it has in the US. According to our sources, Extreme has sold more than 400,000 units to date and continues to be a strong title — appealing not only to the "hard-core" gamer, but the new, and older, game players that the PlayStation has attracted to the marketplace.

On a less-than-positive note, Crystal Dynamics, the first 32-bit software publisher, is no more (see Exnews for more details). It is with much sadness that we say good-by to many great friends in marketing and public relations and hope that they find new homes in short order. While we don't know the exact future of Crystal Dynamics' game development effort, we do know that most of the major publishing houses have been converging upon Crystal's Palo Alto, California offices, looking to buy Pandemonium, Legacy of Kain and 3D Baseball. Alas poor Gex, we hardly knew yee!

We hope you enjoy this issue; with 11 games reviewed, a dozen games previewed, our Exclusive look behind the scenes, at Presto Studios, our first hands-on with Motor Toon Grand Prix 2 and the Crash special, we think it's our best yet.

*Dave*

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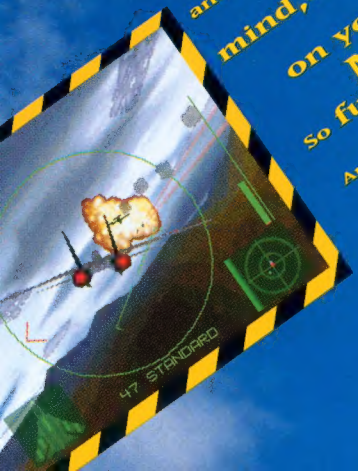

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I know a boy named Donny Graham
Who always has a control stick in hand
What do I mean — you don't understand?
Let me explain, he's lost in Sony Land:

He worked really hard and saved his cash
Then off to EB he made a mad dash
He bought a Sony PlayStation without delay
And now he plays it every single day

During the day he scans and throws
But after work everyone knows
He'll do the thing that he likes best
Putting his Sony skills to the test

Mortal Kombat 3 is his most loved game
He says he needs it to feed his brain
Using Sindel, Kabal, Cyrax or Liu
He'll make mincemeat out of you

Then there's the dungeon game Doom
He doesn't care if it's full of gloom
He's on a mission, his main course:
Kill'em all without remorse

He finds Agile Warrior most disturbing
It's the one game he's having trouble winning
He gets so close to winning the duel
But then he gets low on armor or fuel

If I know Donny and I am certain I do
He'll win that game before the week is through
Then I am sure he'll find something else to play
Another game to occupy his day

That's the sad tale of Donny Graham
One lost soul in Sony Land...

**Submitted by a Concerned Girlfriend:**
**Amy Barth**

**Dear PS*Extreme*,**

I have never written to a magazine before, so I really hope this gets printed. PSExtreme is my favorite magazine, not only because of the great reviews, codes and info, but because it is an unofficial PlayStation magazine. If it were a magazine put out by Sony, all the reviews would be biased in their favor. I have recently bought a Game Shark and I love it. I was overjoyed when I found out theat my favorite mag had a new Game Shark Codez section. I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of some of the new games coming out, such as Pandemonium, and PSExtreme gives the best info by far. I have a few questions that maybe you could answer.
1) In the Game Shark game list, there is a Doom and a Doom v1.1. What is the Version 1.1?
2) My Game Shark didn't come with a Dangerous Waters membership card. Could you tell me the address and info I need to join?
3) Is the Mad Katz steering wheel and pedals any good? I was thinking about getting them.
4) In Resident Evil there is an interesting little clock. It is found on the Guardhouse room that has the pool table. In my best friend's game, the cue sticks were pointing at 3:15, but in my game they said 9:00. What does this mean?
I also have some Game Shark codes for Resident Evil:
Infinte Rocket Launcher — 800C8784 FF0A
Infinte Flame-thrower — 800C8784 FF06
Infinte Health — 800C51AC 0060 and 800C867E 0060
These codes work for either Chris or Jill and make the game really fun because you don't have to worry about health and ammo.

**Sincerely,**
**Tim Buckley**
**Falmouth, MA**

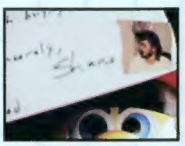
P.S. In regards to the letter written by Mike Paoli in issue 7, if you made a slip cover, I would definitely buy one.
P.S.S. If anyone wants a pen pal, I'm 15 and my [mailing] address is Tim Buckley, P.O. box 1025 West Falmouth 02574. (The perfect pen pal would be a 15 year old girl who also likes video games, but anyone who wants to trade codes and stuff is good enough.)

*Thanks for the kind words. To answer your questions:*
*1) When Doom was first released, there were some minor bugs, so when the time came to make more, to meet demand, they fixed the bugs and that's v1.1.*
*2) To get the Dangerous Waters newsletter, send a check or money order for $12.00 to Dangerous Waters, c/o Interact Accessories, Inc. 10945 McCormick Rd. • Hunt Valley, MD 21031. Be sure to include your address and which system you own.*
*3) See this issue's new 'EXCESSORY' section.*
*4) The times you mention are the number that you use to get into the North Door in the Beehive Passage.*

**Dear PS*Extreme*,**

What is your friggin problem?! In your last issue there was not one, (NOT ONE!), picture of a naked lady. Anyway, I have found a sneaky strategy to use while playing William's 'Joust'. If you stay up high you have less chance of getting hit from those large, naked chickens.
You know what would make a really cool PlayStation game — 'London Bridges Falling Down' — I love that game, espcially the part where everybody falls down, what a rush!
In conclusion I just want to say that your mag sucks, especially the bad spelling, the make-believe tips, the cannibalizing reviews, the slippery paper, the ugly pictures, the names (Greg Off?!), the puke colors, all the X's, the big words, the shameless plugs, the use of the word 'condom' in very small print and the long sentances, but your bad smelling magazine is the only one worth buying, so I'm stuck with you losers.

**Sincerely,**
**Shane**



P.S. I'm naked.

*We're going to have to ask that you please stop reading our magazine. Failure to comply may result in stiff penalties and/or harsh reperussions ... or something.*

**Dear PS*Extreme*,**

My name is Bernard Nocella. I'm 32. First, I would like to say that your mag is just what I've been looking for. The info is complete and just. Your ratings are a big help. I don't like spending $70.00 for nothing and since I've had your mag I have not wasted a penny.
I would like to point out a BIG PROBLEM with Interact's GameShark v1.5c. I have had many problems with the Shark, from codes not working to it crashing and locking up. So many, in fact, that I have had to buy 3 of them. The first one I thought was just bad so I got one more, but still had problems with codes. I called Interact and they told me to change some of the letters on the codes that did not work. Well that worked for about three days. So I called again. They said that I shouldn't worry about it. So I just got 1 more Shark but this one crashed taking my PlayStation with it! I called Sony because the warranty at the store was up. When I told them what had happed, Sony said the the Shark was not licensed by Sony, so my one year warranty wasn't good anymore. I called Interact back yet again and they told me that if Sony said it was the Shark then Interact would pay for the PS and the Shark. Sony could not say that the Shark did it. All they could say was that the problem came from the expansion port. Well I called Interact once again but this time I talked to the corporate office. I was then told about the 1.7c version and all the problems with the 1.5c. They asked me to send my 1.5c in for a free upgrade (nothing on the PS). I was not about to lose my PlayStation, so I called Sears where I had gotten it. I told them everything I have told you and luckily, they gave me a new one.
I do not know about the v1.7c as of yet but I will let you know when I recieve it. PS*Ex* don't let them get away with this. Just because the market is for kids (mostly) should not be a reason to rip us off. It's time it stopped! When you test, test right or don't release it!

**Thank you for you time,**
**Bernard Nocella**
**Cabo Roto, Puerto Rico**

*We've been hearing some complaints from Game Shark customers, most of which were related to the older versions with the 'lock-ups' when codes were entered incorrectly, and the fact that they charge for their codes. This is the first we've heard about a lost PlayStation. The licensing program was created to avoid potential problems such as these. If you buy a product that's not licensed by Sony, you can't expect them to support it in any way. We would like to give Interact a chance to respond before making any judgements. Hey, those Sears guys sound pretty cool!*

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# PlayStation Gaming News
## From Around The Globe

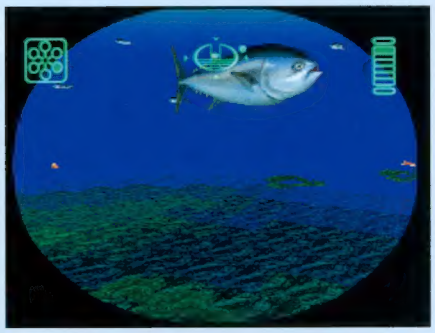
Compiled by Zach Meston

## EVIL IS GOOD (FOR ONE'S PROFIT MARGIN)

Capcom Entertainment proudly proclaimed, in a recent press release, that Resident Evil, the company's freakishly cool action/adventure, is set to become the best-selling game in the history of the PlayStation, having sold more than 250,000 copies in its first six weeks of release. Wowzer! (The release didn't mention figures for Biohazard, the Japanese version, but it's safe to guess it has also sold like crazy.) Says Capcom's president, Greg Ballard: "Resident Evil has surpassed Street Fighter Alpha, in sales, which I'm proud to say exceeded 230,000 units. We knew Resident Evil was going to be a big title for Capcom, because of the tremendous interest it has generated from the trade, press, consumers and now even from a movie studio." Now if they can avoid casting Jean Claude Van "Damme, What a Bad Actor" as Chris Redfield, they might have a decent flick...

## 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE PLAYSTATION

Aquanaut's Holiday, developed and published by Sony Computer Entertainment, is a unique 3-D exploration/construction game that plays kinda like an underwater SimCity. You're cast as the world's foremost marine explorer, having recently accepted a mission to, and we quote, "explore an unknown section of deep ocean and build a unique habitat." You take command of the advanced submarine HOLIDAY (hence the name of the game—geddit?) and plunge headlong (nyuk, nyuk) into your mission. You can chat with marine life, using a language of sounds; construct a reef with multicolored blocks to attract strange and mysterious creatures (there are over 120 in all); or just cruise the ocean floor and stumble upon shipwrecks, pyramids, and perhaps even a lost civilization or two. Aquanaut's Holiday should be on store shelves this very moment.



## LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW!

Tokyo, Japan based UEP (Universal Entertainment Planning) Systems, Inc. is currently negotiating to have its PlayStation snow boarding title, "Cool Borders", picked-up for an American release. The game can best be described as Ridge Racer on ice. Cool Borders sports a very impressive frame rate and gameplay that is not dissimilar to the Epyx classic, "California Games" (the surfing event.) Players can compete solo, head-to-head against a friend or compete against themselves — via a system that clones your previous best run and establishes it as the new standard to beat. The game will have multiple courses, both third and first-person viewpoints and will feature special moves that can be executed in mid-air. We will keep you informed as to potential American release dates and with more details on the project, as they become available.

## CRYSTAL D: R.I.P.?

After four years in the video game business, third-party software developer, Crystal Dynamics, has heavily "restructured" internal operations, laying off a bunch of folks and trying to figure out if they'll continue to publish their own titles. (Quite doubtful, according to sources.) The company was the first 32-bit game publisher and created the very first 32-bit video game, Crash 'N Burn, for the ill-fated 3DO Interactive Multiplayer. Indeed, that was Crystal Dynamics' big problem; for much of its existence, it was producing games for a system with a teeny-tiny user base.

Crystal Dynamics managed to squirt out four PS titles before the Grim Reaper came a-knockin': the side-scrolling platformer, GEX, the 3-D driver/shooter, Off-world Interceptor Extreme, the 3-D shooter Total Eclipse Turbo, and most recently, Slam 'n Jam 96. But all of those games were minimally enhanced conversions of 3DO titles, which looked and played sadly outdated when compared to the cutting-edge PlayStation games provided by other publishers. It could also be argued that most of the PlayStation's early adopters were the same folks who adopted the 3DO and, therefore, already owned Crystal Dynamics' 3DO releases but we're not the kind to argue.

All of the Crystal Dynamics games displayed at E3—including Pandemonium, the stunning 3-D platform/adventure featured in our June issue—are, according to Crystal Dynamics CEO, Ted Ardell, still going to be produced and shipped, most likely by another publisher. "Clearly, the industry is in a different position than we thought it would be a year ago," said Ardell. "The 32-bit installed base is not near as great as anyone expected." Sour grapes, Ted?

EX NEWS

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# SEND US YOUR CODES AND WIN BIG PRIZES!

Each month we'll pick the best code sent in by our loyal and intelligent readers and send that person a brand spankin' new copy of ASCII's hot RPG for the PlayStation, King's Field or, if fighting's your thing, ASCII's SpecializedStick (you decide.) But wait! That's not all: if you act now, we'll also include ASCII's super stylish SpecializedPad for the PlayStation, for your controlling pleasure, PLUS twelve (12) free issues of the best, the only, monthly dedicated PlayStation magazine, PSExtreme, of course! Whoa! That's a lot of cool stuff for just a code; what are you waiting for?

## WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations and thanks go to this month's winner, Todd Schneider of Wynnewood, PA. He got us this awesome V-Tennis code before anyone else! Thanks Todd, your goodies are on the way!

## V-Tennis

SUPER PLAYERS:

My tricks are for the PSX game "V-Tennis". In the "match" player selection screen, press L2 twice. Then press R1 three times. After that press ↓. Next press Δ four times. Lastly, press ×. If the code works, you'll hear a little noise that doesn't sound like the normal noise when you select your player. This code allows you to be Mattox, the best man in the game. To be Adversa (the best woman), in the match player selection screen, hold ↓ L1, R2, up, and □. Then, press ×.

CONTEST RULES: Anyone of any age can enter. The only people not eligible to win are employees of Dimension Publishing or ASCII Entertainment, their friends, family, pets and anyone they talk to or know of. Dimension Publishing reserves the right to make any and all decisions regarding the contest. One winner per month will be chosen, at Dimension Publishing's discretion, based on the code or trick supplied by the entrant. If you win but do not specify, in your code submission, which prize you want to receive (King's Field or an ASCII Specialized Stick), then we will choose for you.

## Bust-A-Move 2

CHARACTER SELECT AND "ANOTHER WORLD": I thought the name of this game shoulda been Bust-A-Move 2: Electric Boogaloo, but I digress. When you beat the mysterious "?" level in the Puzzle Game mode, and wait until the end of the credits, you're rewarded with a code. And it's a darn simple one: before (or at) the title screen, press R1, ↑, L2, ↓. A little critter appears above the CREDITS display in the lower-right corner to show that the code is active. When you play the Puzzle Game mode, you'll encounter an entirely new series of levels in "Another World." When you choose the Player vs. Player mode, you get to play as any of the "characters" from the Player vs. Computer mode.

## PO'ed

AMMO REFILL: Switch to foot mode and do a backflip by pressing □+L2. During the backflip, press →+×+○ at the same time.

COLLISION DETECTION OFF: By turning this off, you literally can't be touched—and can't walk on solid surfaces. Go into jetpack mode and find a dead body. Stand on the body and press Δ for the weapon menu. Press L1+→+↓ and the collision is off. Use the jetpack to fly around the level. To turn the detection back on, press Δ and press L1+→+↓ again.

ENDING SEQUENCE: At the main menu, select "Load Game." Press and hold →, then press ○, then press Δ to cancel. Press □+← at the same time and let go. Press Δ to cancel. Enjoy your "hard-earned" reward, cheating swine.

FARTING SOUNDS: The quest for gaming knowledge knows no bounds, so here's one of the ickier codes we've ever had to print. At the main menu, select "Load Game." Press L1+R2+R1+R2 at the same time, then exit "Load Game." During the game, all the butt monsters will make farting sounds when they fire at you.

FULL INVENTORY: Press □ + Select to enter the map mode and press ← until the arrow is pointing at yourself. Press Start to return to the standard view. While the camera is rotating, press L1+ +×+○ at the same time. Press Select to exit the map mode and press Δ to check out your awesome array of weaponry.

HEALTH REFILL: Switch to foot mode and do a backflip by pressing □+L2. During the backflip, press ↓+×+R2 at the same time.

INVULNERABILITY: You need the drill before you can activate this code; if you don't have it, use the Full Inventory cheat to get it. Press Δ to enter the weapon selection menu. Highlight the frying pan with L1 or R1. Press Δ to select the pan and press Δ a second time to return to the weapon menu. Press +R1 until your health counter starts flashing 999. You are now a god. To turn off the code, press and hold □+R1 until the flashing 999 disappears.

LEVEL SELECT: At the main menu, press L1+L2+R1+R2+↑ at the same time. Select "New Game" and press L1+L2+R1+R2+↑ at the same time. Select a difficulty level and the level select menu appears, allowing you to zip to any of the 26 levels.

## Return Fire

GOOFY SYMBOLS: Call up the password entry window (with the sickeningly cute symbols of bunny rabbits, smiley faces, etc.) and rapidly press L1, L2, R1, and R2 until the symbols turn into slightly demented versions of themselves. Truly, a silly code.

## Magic Carpet

LEVEL SELECT AND OTHER CHEATS: Go to the options screen and press Δ, ○, □, L1, L2, R1, R2. This creates a new option called "Level Number," letting you choose any level in the game. Oh, but that's not all, Sparky. When you pause the game, press □ for more Mana, press Δ for all the magic spells, or press ○ to instantly restore the world.

## Adidas Power Soccer

FEMALE ANNOUNCER: In ARCADE-MODE on the Commentator option press C+□ together and you'll hear a nice female voice.

## The Need for Speed

ADD WEIGHT TO A CAR: This is another trick accessible after entering TSVEMS at the password screen. At any car selection screen, select Car Showcase and Mechanical. Then, select Next Ride. Pressing L1 will add weight to the front of your car and pushing R1 will add weight to the rear of your car. The weight is indicated by the number of red triangles.

## Fade to Black

This bitchin' action/adventure is a little TOO bitchin' for our usual single-issue walkthrough, so we're kicking out the jams with a whopping three-part strategy guide. The manual has a partial walkthrough of Level 1, so we'll start where the manual leaves off and work our way up. More next month—are ya excited?!

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

- Here's the procedure to follow when you open a door into a new area. #1: Reload your gun, whether you have eight bullets left or one. It's unlimited, my friend—take advantage! #2: Draw your gun and take small steps forward until the door slides open. #3: Pause at the door to see if anyone's inside, and look around the corner(s) for Morph guards waiting to ambush ya. (You have to use the Regular or Expert control modes to look around corners.)
- The Morph guards can kill you with their touch if you get too close, and fire at you from long range with homing bullets. Always wait until the bullet is as close as possible, then duck underneath it.
- Regular and exploding ammo are unlimited, but other ammo types are limited to nine bullets. Save these more powerful bullets (and bouncing mines) for more powerful enemies.
- Each level has at least one energy recharger that recharges your force field. If you're low on juice during a level, take a clear route back to the energy recharger and use it.

LEVEL 1 WALKTHROUGH

- The manual leaves off at the machine room, where you can push the red button or blow up the Morph tube to destroy the force field. (We suggest the Morph tube.) Enter the Infirmary and shoot the Morph behind the crates. Open the left locker and take the Medikit, then open the right locker and take the key. Quickly turn around and shoot the Morph and the patient (if you haven't already). Walk north to the door and shoot the two drones, then go east to the Guard Hall and shoot the Morph.
- Walk through the south door to the Computer Room and shoot the Morph. Enter the north door and shoot the Morph around the right corner, then use the terminal. Walk through the south door, shoot the Morph, and jump over the electric panels into the next room. Shoot the two Morphs and use either elevator. Shoot the Morph at the end of the hallway and push the red button in the wall niche to turn off the electric panels. Run to the end of the hallway and shoot the two drones behind the door. Take the Rec Room Key out of the locker.
- Take the left elevator down and run north to the Rec Room. Use the terminal to turn on the Guard Room elevator. Return to the elevators and take one up, then use the elevator on the left to go up again. Shoot the tank drone rolling down the hallway from the left. Run west and enter the Warden's Room. Use a bouncing mine to ricochet through the glass and kill him, then turn around and shoot the Morph. Take the floating diamond it leaves behind and open the locker for the Hangar Code.
- Return to the Guard Hall and use the right elevator. Kill the two drones and the Morph behind the force field. Use the terminal to activate the Kartrack. Follow the car through the locked door into the Control Room. Press the red button and ride the elevator up. Walk through the door and jump over the colored floor panels. Use the terminal to open the Hangar. Return to the Guard Hall and use the right elevator. Go north through two doors and shoot the Morph. Follow the passage down to the last door and shoot the three drones behind it.
- Walk through the south door and shoot the tank drone. Follow the hallway and go through the door. Use the computer to reactivate the Kartrack. Return to the room where you first found the Kartrack and activate it again, following it back into the Control Room. Ride the now-activated elevator around the corner. Shoot the two drones in the Hangar and walk to the side of the ship.

LEVEL 2 WALKTHROUGH

- Read Message 1 in your inventory. Walk through the south door and shoot the Morph. Turn around and look into the Warehouse, backing up into the hall, but keeping the door open. View Message 2 when it arrives and shoot the two Morphs that drop into the Warehouse. Use the energy charger and go through the south door, then the next south door. Shoot the drone, but don't miss and hit the glass, 'cause that would kill you. Go around the corner and shoot another drone.
- Search the lockers and go through the next door. Run across the floor plate and through the open door. Shoot the two Morphs in the Guard Room and use the closest terminal. Go through the door at the end of the room and shoot the Morph. Destroy the drone around the corner and open the north door. Shoot the tank drone and the two far Morphs in the Cells Room. Return to the energy recharger in the Guard Room if you run low.
- Return to the hall south of the Warehouse and go through the next door. Stand to one side of the bouncing mines and run past when the timing is right. Draw your gun and shoot the two Morphs behind the next door. Use the left terminal to shut down the generator. View the message and return to the Cells Room. Go through the north door into the Research Lab.
- Search the locker and use the terminal by the professor to free him. View the message and use slow steps so the prof can stay close. Walk through the Washroom and shoot the drone and Morph, then walk through the south door and shoot the Morph. Shoot the drone in the Teleporter Room and take the professor into the center of the room.
- Go through the west door of the Teleporter Room into the Warehouse, then through the northeast door into the hallway. Draw your gun, go through the north door, and shoot the spider. Reload, turn around, and kill a second spider. Go through the north door and follow the left corridor through a door. Step onto the first floor plate, back off it, and step on it again to turn off the force fields. Jump the second plate and open the locker for a plasma clip.
- Go to the Machine Room and select the cube. Walk to the terminal in the center of the room and use the cube. Run back through the Warehouse and Washroom, not bothering to shoot the drones. Use the teleporter in the Teleporter Room to finish the level.

LEVEL 3 WALKTHROUGH

- Shoot the drone and two Morphs outside the door. Enter the hallway and turn left, walking east. Stop before you reach the hall running north/south. Draw your gun, sidestep, and shoot the Morph to the north. (If you enter the hallway, he kills you.) Use the plasma ammo only if you have to. Walk north up the hallway and stop before the west/east hallway. Sidestep and shoot the Morph to the left.
- Enter the southwest room with the mine carts. Press the button on the wall four times at 20-second intervals. The carts allow you to pass through locked doors. Follow a cart into the Warehouse room to the north. Open all the lockers and follow a cart into the next room, going through both doors into the Armory. Shoot the Morph to the left, open the lockers, and go into the south room. Use the terminal to open the lab doors. Open the near locker and leave the Armory, running south to the end of the hallway.
- Enter the small room to the right, use the energy recharger, and open the locker. Exit the way you entered so you're at the south end of the hallway, facing the east doors. Draw your gun and wait for a cart to open the door. Shoot the two Morphs and enter the Secondary Warehouse. Open the locker for an anti-radiation shield. Return to the north/south hall and take the first door to the right. Open the locker and you become trapped behind a force field. Jump the electrical plates until you reach the floor plate at the end, which turns off the force field. Jump over the plate that turned on the force fields as you leave.
- Exit to the north/south hallway and go north to the next right-hand door. Go through it and shoot the spider, then open the locker. Return to the room south of the Armory and go through the east door. Activate your shield as you enter. There's a monster on the left wall. Before you reach it, turn and step south. Face east and jump past it from the south end. Sidestep while facing south and shoot the Morph. Run south and stay on the left side of the hall, across from the monsters. Shoot the drone and two Morphs in the south room. Run inside and let the door close behind you. Turn off your shield and read the message.
- Turn on the shield again and leave the room. Stay on the right side of the hall, taking the first door on the left. Turn off the shield and run back to use the energy recharger. Return to the Excavator Room the way you exited and turn on the shield when you reach the radioactive zone. Turn it off when you reach the Excavator Room. Go to the excavator and select risidium, then use it on the excavator. Turn your shield on, run to the side of the excavator, and use another piece of risidium. The excavator rolls into the lab and kills the alien. Run into the room and open the north locker. Look at the document and the message.

*Send all code submissions to:*

***EXECUTE***
Dimension Publishing
1175 Chess Drive, Suite E
Foster City, CA 94404
or email us at: d3@quake.net

## GAME SHARK Codez

**Welcome to the Game Shark section. Each month we'll list the newest and coolest codez right here for your cheat'n pleasure. Be warned: These codes won't work if you don't own a Game Shark, so don't be calling us and complaining that they don't work when you try to enter them in your password screen!!**

JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE
Unlimited Lives .....800b5a94 0003
Unlimited Energy .....800b5a98 0003

3D LEMMINGS
Infinite Blockers .....30113794 0005
Infinite Turners .....30113795 0005
Infinite Bombers .....30113796 0005
Infinite Builders .....30113797 0005
Infinite Bashers .....30113798 0005
Infinite Miners .....30113799 0005
Infinite Diggers .....3011379A 0005
Infinite Climbers .....3011379B 0005
Infinite Floaters .....3011379C 0005
Release Rate Always 50 ....80089F14 0032
Release Rate Always 99 ....80089F14 0063
Release Rate Always 1 .....80089F14 0001

ALIEN TRILOGY
Infinite Health .....8009A040 03E7
Infinite Charge Grenades ..8009A058 03E7
Infinite Handgun Bullets ..8009A046 03E7
Infinite Shotgun Shells ...8009A04A 03E7
Infinite Flame Thrower ....8009A052 03E7
Infinite Pulse Rounds .....8009A04C 03E7
Infinite Smart Gun Rounds .8009A054 03E7
Infinite Batteries .....8009A05A 03E7
Have Shotgun .....8008F33E 0029
Have Flame Thrower .....8008F34A 0029
Have Pulse Rifle .....8008F342 0029
Have Smart Gun .....8008F346 0029

SKELETON WARRIORS
Infinite Lives .....801DB768 0004
Infinite Crystal .....801DB774 0020
Infinite Energy .....801DB760 0064

# Konami Enforcer Game Gun

Konami's "lethal" Enforcer game gun will be shipping to retail shelves sometime this September. Although the details are still sketchy, Konami is planning on bundling the gun with several titles. Exactly what titles it will actually be bundled with, (Konami has both Crypt Killers and Lethal Enforcers I & II in the works and there are possibilities of pack-ins with other companies) is yet to be announced. The gun is made of durable, lightweight, day-glow green plastic and is officially licensed by Sony.

*Suggested retail price:* ***$24.99-$29.99***

Konami America, Inc.
900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
847-215-5100

# Mad Catz Steering Wheel

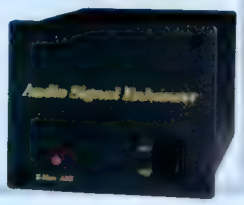
Mad Catz Analog Steering Wheel is the ultimate driving peripheral for racing enthusiasts. Made from durable ABS plastic, the steering wheel has many features, such as an optional direction pad, easy to reach action buttons, an attached stick shift and connecting foot pedals. The steering wheel works quite well with titles such as Ridge Racer, Destruction Derby and WipeOut and is currently available at most stores where the PlayStation is sold.

*Suggested retail price:* ***$69.99***

Mad Catz
14372 Old Highway 80, Suite D,
El Cajon, CA 92021
800-659-2287

# The Audio Signal Enhancer

The Audio Signal Enhancer is for the discerning individual who is seeking to squeeze the utmost in quality sound from their PlayStation or other digital source device. What it essentially does is eliminate the excessive 'brightness' that is found in video game tracks, bringing out the fullness of individual voices, instruments and sound, so gamers can now enjoy more dynamic and realistic sound effects when playing their favorite video games. At this time, we can't actually comment on the performance of this thing, as we are awaiting a test unit.



*Suggested retail price:* ***$198.00***

Z-Man Corporation
2118 Batchawana S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49508
616-246-7929

# Sony's Analog Joystick

The most unusual joystick you've ever plugged into a console system is on its way from Sony. Officially titled the "Analog Joystick", this dual stick gargantuan has all the features you need for total immersion in a mile-high environ: eight buttons on the base as well as on the sticks, analog and digital modes and a top-hat directional pad. We also feel that we should mention this is a one-player only controller -- one stick for each hand. And, yes my friend, it *is* going to work with Robotron X!

*Suggested retail price:* ***$69.95***

Sony Computer Entertainment
919 E. Hillsdale Blvd., 2nd Floor
Foster City, CA 94404
415-655-8000

# Memory Card Plus, Memory Drive and PS Flight Force Pro

Interact is preparing to release three exciting new products for your PlayStation. The first is the Memory Card Plus, which gives you 8 'virtual' memory cards in one small package for a total of 120 save slots. When one is full you switch to the next with the flick of a button. The second product is the PS Flight Force Pro, an analog controller with a separate throttle. This stick features programmable moves, auto fire and four play modes. The last (and most unusual) product is the Memory Drive -- an actual 3.5" disk drive that plugs into the memory card slot of the PlayStation, allowing you to store 15 game slots on one floppy disk. The drive will come with 10 disks and, initially, will only be available to members of Interact's Dangerous Waters & web page clubs.

*Memory Card Plus s.r.p.:* ***$49.95***
*PS Flight Force Pro s.r.p.:* ***$59.95***
*Memory Drive s.r.p.:* ***$99.95***

Interact Accessories, Inc.
10945 McCormick Rd., Hunt Valley, MD 21031
410-785-5661

# Vortex Analog Controller

ASCII Entertainment is also about to introduce their analog controller which features a sleek-yet-rugged design, both optical analog and digital compatibility, auto and turbo fire switches, analog throttle control and an extra long cord. The joystick itself is rotatable for changing views while moving in any direction and has a top-hat, two triggers and two buttons. ASCII didn't cut any corners on this one. Expect the same top-notch quality as the rest of their product line.

*Suggested retail price:* ***$69.95***

ASCII Entertainment, Inc.
P.O. Box 6639,
San Mateo, CA 94403
415-780-0166

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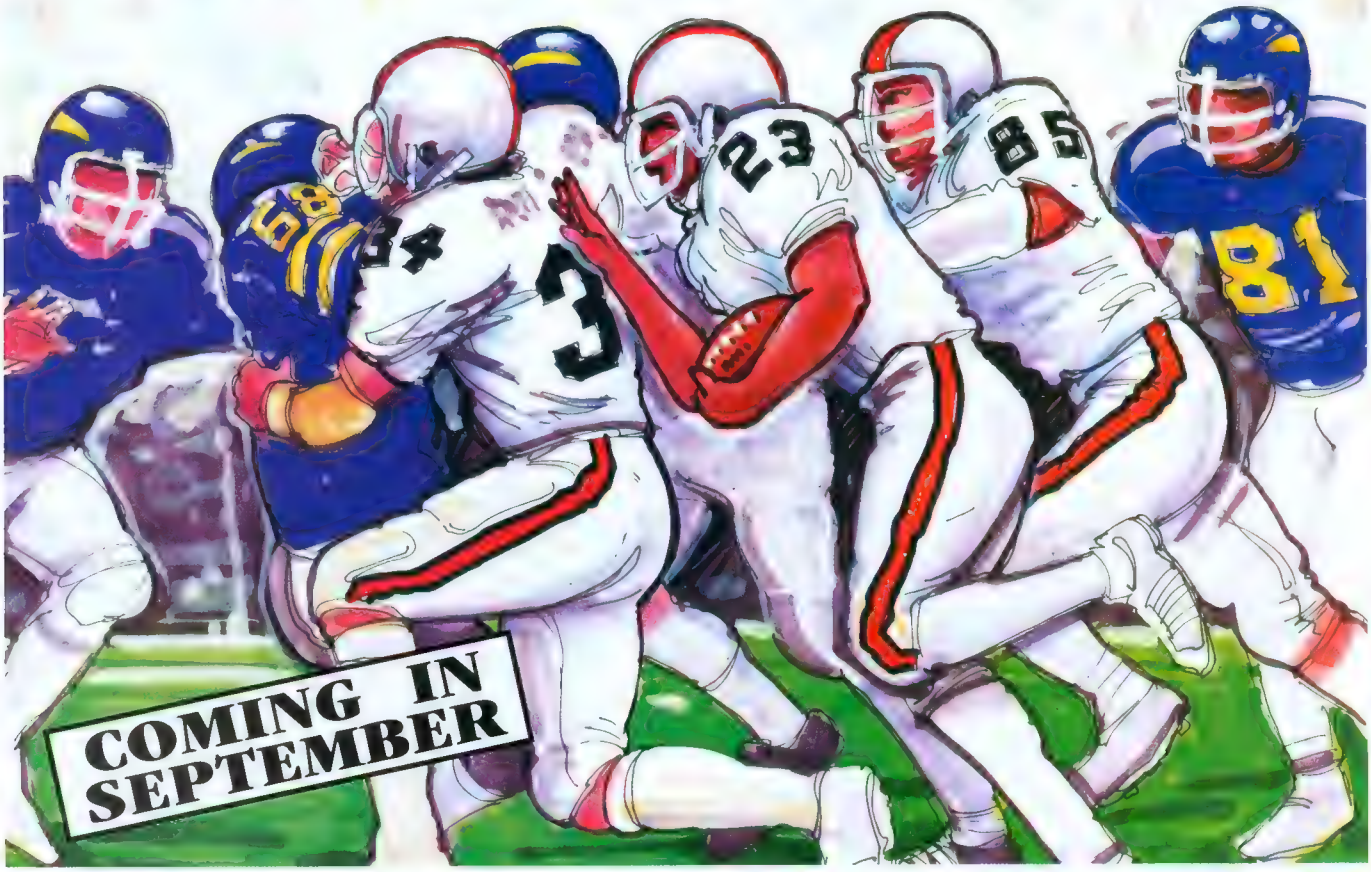


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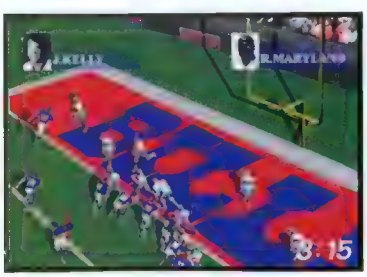
A memory card may be required for some features.



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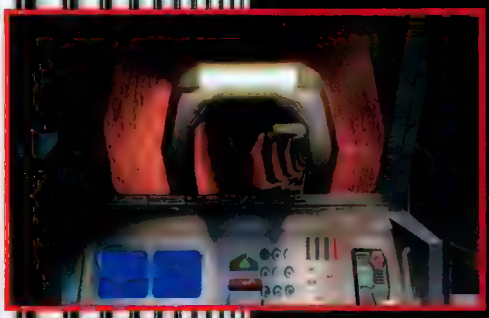
# PEGASUS PRIME

## DEVELOPED BY PRESTO STUDIOS



Recently, I took take a train ride down to the beautiful oceanside city of San Diego, where I had the pleasure of visiting the bustling offices of Presto Studios. This passionate team of talented programmers, writers, animators and artists are well known in the PC industry as the group behind the successful Journeyman Project and, its sequel, The Journeyman Project 2: Buried in Time (both released for PC and Mac formats.)

For those of you who might not be familiar with The Journeyman games, they're best described as incredibly detailed, interactive adventures, with highly photo-realistic visuals and rich, multi-layered cinematic storylines. The story is set around time travel, where you, as a secret agent, are sworn to uphold the integrity of history, by keeping tabs on the temporal flow. This premise sets up the opportunity for a great adventure game. You can move back and forth across time and space, as events unfold, and your actions effect the outcome in other time continuum(s)

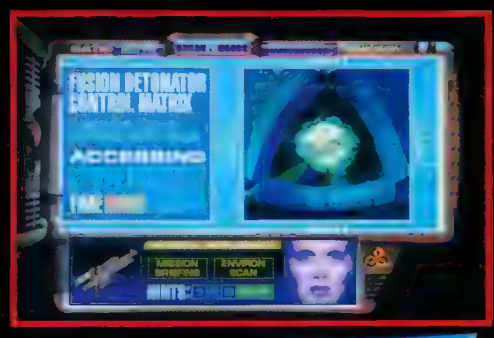
What they have been quietly working on, since the advent of the 32-bit consoles, is a way to take their proven technology and manipulate and enhance it to the PlayStation's hardware capabilities. The result of their hard

work and efforts is The Journeyman Project: Pegasus Prime, which is still currently under development and should be out by this Christmas.

Pegasus Prime is the first game of its kind for the PlayStation, and Presto has gone out of their way to take advantage of the format. Expect high production values throughout, like the use of 24-bit color (that's 16.7 million colors!) as opposed to the usual 16-bit color (32,000 colors) found in most PlayStation games, over 80 minutes of live-action video, painstakingly integrated into beautifully rendered synthetic environments, and 16-bit, CD quality audio and sound effects.

Although the game does not sport any kind of true 3D technology — pretty much the only thing that gets released for the PlayStation these days — Presto feels they have something entirely special. According to Jack Davis, Pegasus Prime's Producer, "Pegasus Prime sets the standard for interactive adventures, not only for the Playstation, but all set-top boxes. Not only because of its innovative graphics technology, but also because of its mouth-watering environments, mind-expanding gameplay and epic-multi-layered storyline." Is he right? Only time will tell ...

*Greg*



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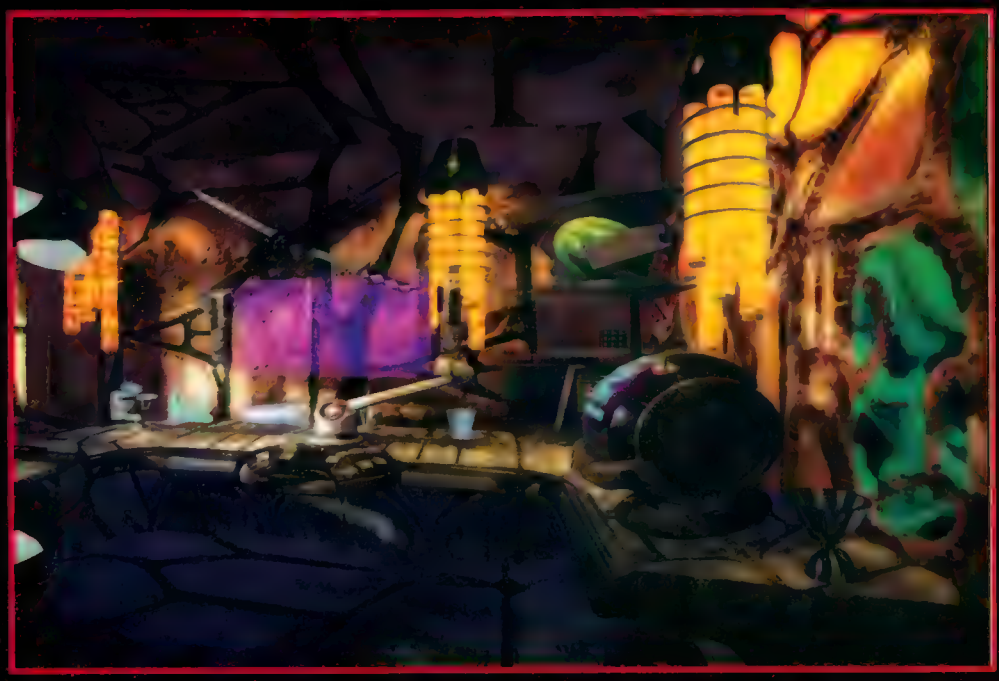

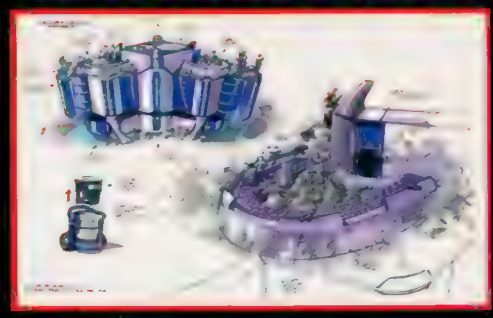

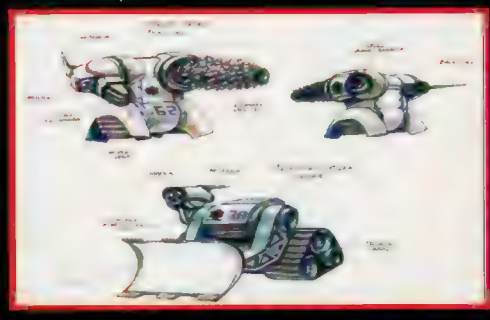

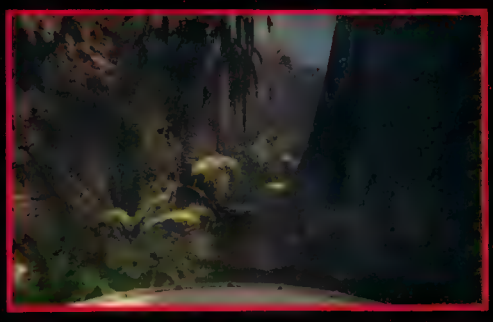

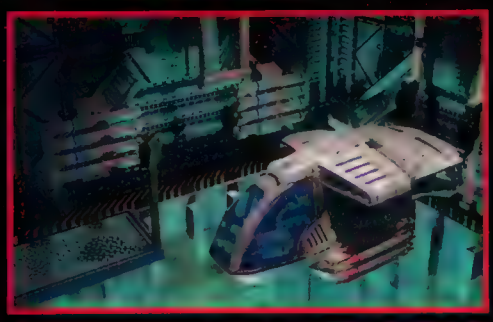

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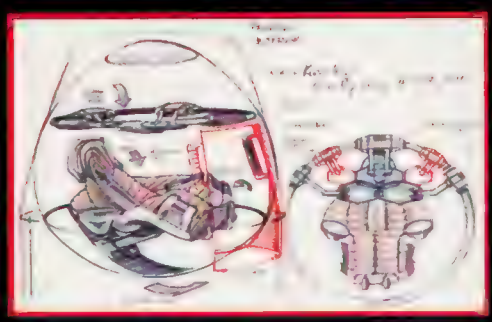
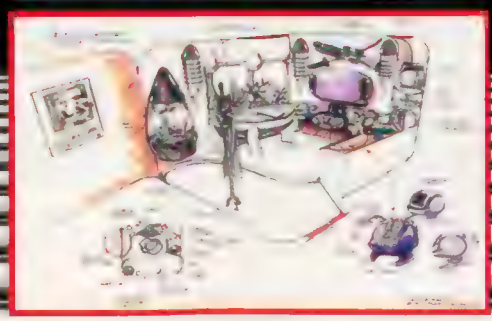
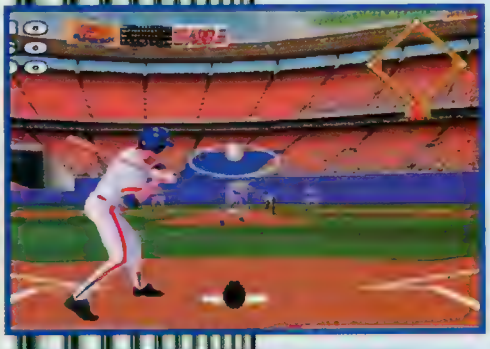


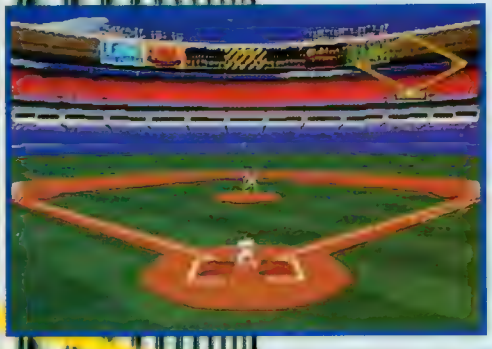


# THUNDER TRUCK RALLY

**PSYGNOSIS • AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER**

Adding to their growing line-up of incredible driving titles, Psygnosis is preparing the release of Thunder Truck Rally, an action-packed, off-road racer expected to ship sometime later this Summer. Developed by Reflections, the same team that created Destruction Derby, Thunder Truck Rally will feature fully realistic, texture-mapped, 3D landscapes and stunning special effects, including dust clouds, blizzards, mist and lens flares, with complete freedom of movement, while racing at insane speeds through changing weather patterns and terrain. Thunder Truck Rally will feature realistic physics, which calculate the forces on each vehicle's wheels for accurately-modeled suspension and body effects. Rally will also offer players plenty of options, including: 12 Training Modes, where they can practice; the Thunder Truck Rally Endurance Race, where they can race a four-day, five-stage competition across 500 miles of grueling terrain; or the Stunt and Challenge Mode, the ultimate in four-wheel action, where they can speed over the roofs of battered cars for points.

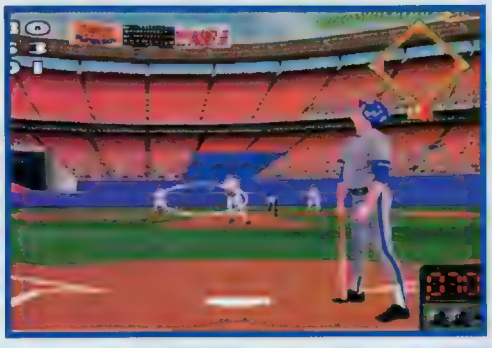




# GRAND SLAM BASEBALL 96

**BURST/VIRGIN • AVAILABLE AUGUST**

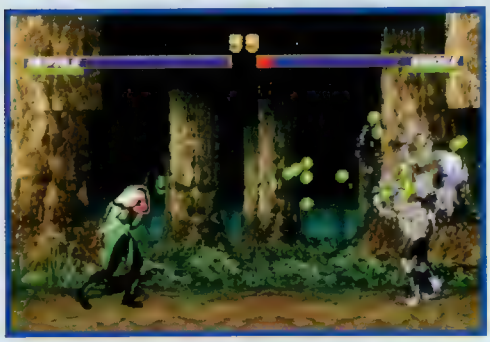
Virgin Interactive Entertainment (VIE), through its "Burst" — product development division, is set to release its version of the grand ol' game, entitled "Grand Slam 96". Grand Slam '96 will feature an MLBPA license, full season play with statistical tracking, 28 accurately modeled stadiums, a true 3D environment with multiple camera angles — including a first-person vantage point, player management and a home run derby. Unique to Grand Slam is their "wind-up" pitching mode, where the player has control over the pitcher's arm and delivery and a batting mode that allows the player to control the timing and power (through meters) of each swing. With a VERY crowded field for PlayStation baseball games (nine, at last count), it is these kinds of features that can help Burst and VIE separate their product from the rest of the pack. We'll let you know whether or not they have accomplished this in our September issue (the game is currently scheduled for an August release), when we will review the game.



# RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

**NACMO • AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER**

Ridge Racer, one of the first few games that was originally shipped with the PlayStation, back in September of last year, is finally getting a sequel, Ridge Racer Revolution. Although more like an extension of the first, rather than a true sequel, RRR offers the player one new track and some new features, such as a rear-view mirror and a link-up option. The track itself is quite a bit more varied in terrain, ranging from grassy mountains to tropical beaches, and still retains that amazing graphic quality found in the first. We should be back next month with the complete review.



# MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

**WILLIAMS • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER**

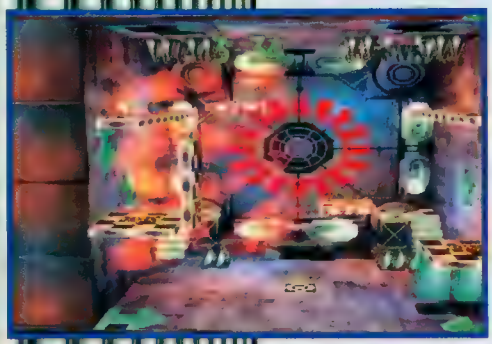
MK fans have a major reason to rejoice, as the newest incarnation, titled Mortal Kombat Trilogy, is set to be released in time for Christmas, for the PlayStation and Nintendo 64 (sorry, Sega). MKT will encompass all of the previous MK titles and feature just about every character (including the hidden ones), fatality, babality, animality, etc ... that you could possibly find in the previous four (Mortal Kombat, MK2, MK3 and Ultimate MK.) Even now, in its early state, MKT looks extremely sharp, with crisp graphics and smooth-as-silk controls, and the fine folks at Williams assure us that there will be even more hidden surprises and secrets included, that weren't found in any of the others. In order to offer something different to both platforms (PS and N64), Williams has added something unique to each one. At this point, what the unique element actually is is shrouded in mystery, but we'll definitely keep you posted as more info becomes available.

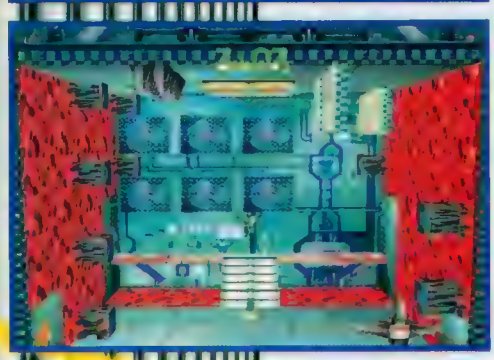
DO YOU LOVE THE SMELL OF
SCORCHED TIRES IN THE MORNING?

# BEYOND THE BEYOND

**SONY • AVAILABLE AUGUST**

The time is almost upon us! Beyond the Beyond, Sony's first internal RPG from Japan, will finally be released for RPG-starved gamers this August. Beyond is the first in a planned series of RPGs to be released by SCEA, including Arc the Lad and, just maybe, Final Fantasy VII. In the game, you lead a young boy named Finn and his friend, a small dragon named Steiner, on a journey to destroy the forces of evil that have emerged from deep within the core of the Earth. In true RPG tradition, the game involves a huge adventure, with plenty of puzzles, battles, and multiple quests. Some of the features packed into this game include: Two different playing perspectives — a top-down, isometric view during exploration/adventure and a revolving 360° view during 3D battles, the option to gather up to 13 members in your party and an original symphonic soundtrack.

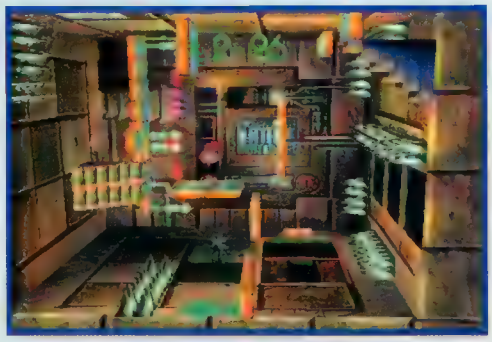


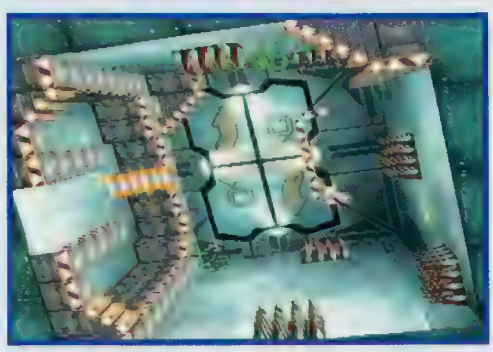


# BLAST CHAMBER

**ACTIVISION • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER**

Activision's Blast Chamber is a very unique title. So much so, that it's quite difficult to categorize what type of game it actually is. It has puzzle elements, but it's not a puzzle game. It has sports-like competition, but it's not a sport game. It has plenty of running and jumping, while avoiding traps and pitfalls, but it's not an action/platformer. To top it off, it takes place in a rotateable 3D cube. What's really cool is that Activision, along with ATD, Ltd., has successfully combined all of these different elements into one highly addictive and extremely fun-to-play game. The goal in the game is to stay one step ahead of your opponents (up to four can play simultaneously), while traversing an intricate maze of deadly obstacles, to obtain control of a powerful, pulsating crystal. Once acquired, it's up to you to hold onto it long enough to place it into the appropriate transmitter (goal) before a deadly time bomb strapped to your back is detonated. This is what we call good clean fun!



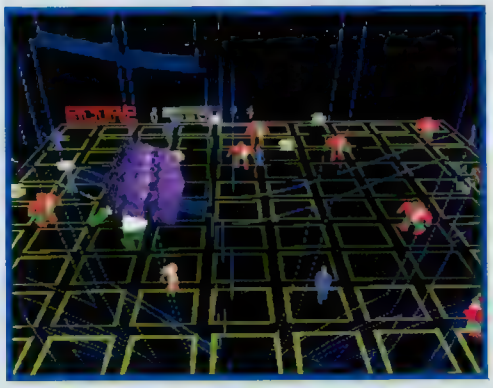


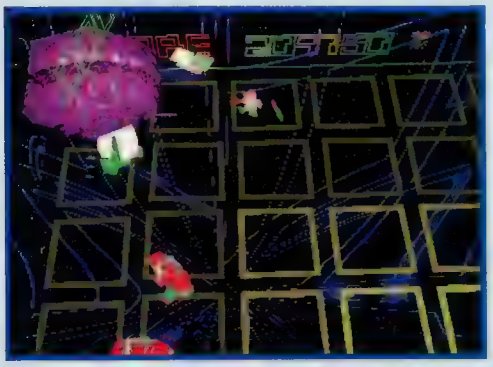
EXPECTING

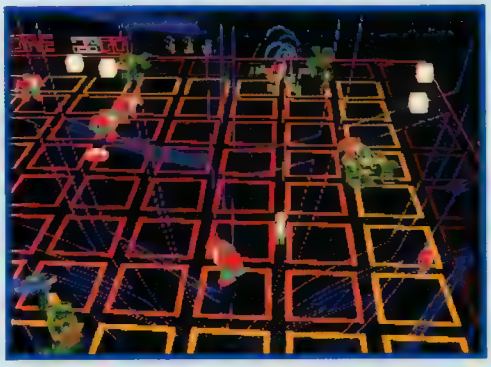
# ROBOTRON X

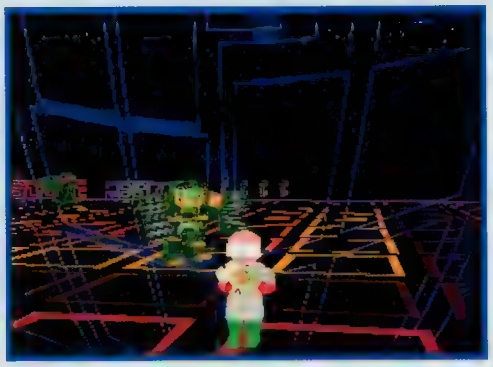
**WILLIAMS • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER**

Yes, we've shown shots of Robotron X in the last three consecutive issues, but how could we not show more when the game keeps progressing and is looking this good? So, what's new in this version, you ask? What's new is: bosses, even more color, more speed, more special effects and an awesome "techno" soundtrack (not pictured). So, what can we expect in the final game, you ask? There will be: special weapons & power-ups, bonus levels, new characters, new bosses and a special creepy mode (not!). Williams is anticipating a November '96 release ... we'll definitely keep you updated!







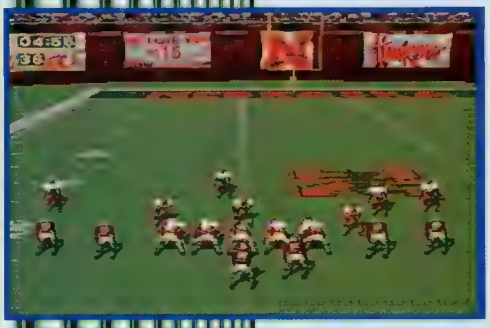


# DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

**PSYGNOSIS • AVAILABLE OCTOBER**

Psygnosis is hoping to lead the pack of next generation PlayStation titles this year with more than a few sequels to some of the best-selling titles of '95. This is where Destruction Derby 2 comes in, currently in development and being revved up for a Fall launch. Reflections, the programmers of the original DD, have pulled out all the stops to make the sequel much, much more intense. Players can expect longer tracks, an improved racing model (the cars have even more realistic physics and can now catch air, flip, cartwheel and roll — in realtime — making for the most realism seen in a game of this type yet), new special effects, such as shooting flames, flying sparks and huge vehicle parts flying through the air, a new pit feature where drivers can repair damaged vehicles and then get back on track and a stunt mode, which allows them to rig up their own dare-devil stunt show with spectacular wrecks. The screen shots you see here are from a very early version of the game (about 25%).

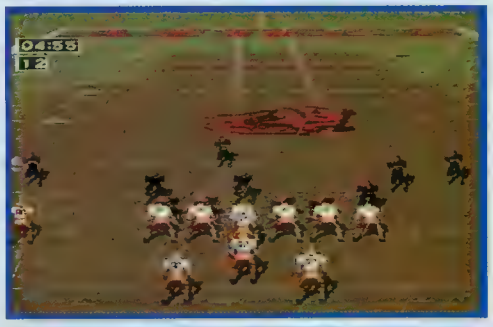
SEE MONTE CARLO.
AT A LEISURELY 200 MPH.



# NCAA GAMEBREAKER

**SONY • AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER**

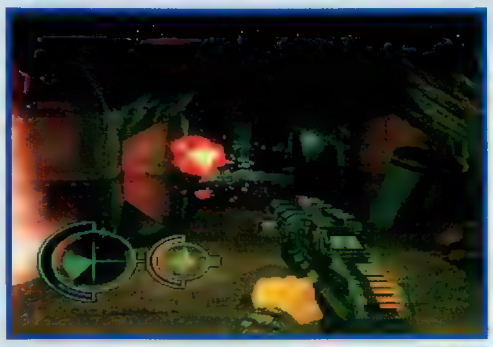
Sony's San Diego development arm is about to expand their sports lineup with "NCAA GameBreaker." By the same team that produced last year's Mega-hit, NFL GameDay, the game looks to have all of the features that make college football a unique sporting experience. GameBreaker features all 110 Division 1A teams, including the newly formed Big 12's, the Texas Tech Red Raiders (can't tell who penned this article ... can we?), the top 1AA teams, all 10 Division 1A conferences, all logos painted on end zones, season play with bowl games, a tournament mode with a National Championship with 32 teams, over 400 plays in the play book, interactive sidelines, 45 man rosters with substitutions and injuries, and season statistical tracking in more categories than GameDay. The game will also feature faster gameplay than GameDay, the Wishbone offensive set and play book, an extensive database of college fight songs, performed by the USC Marching Band, bigger and more detailed players, more animations, unlimited camera angles, a PA announcer, simulation & arcade modes, adjustable gameplay speed and more.



# TENKA

**PSYGNOSIS • AVAILABLE JANUARY**

From the 3D engine-creating masters at Psygnosis, who created the likes of WipeOut and Destruction Derby, comes Tenka, their first Doom-style, 3D shooter for the PlayStation. In addition to the realistic 3D real-time environments, that we've come to expect from premiere programmers like Psygnosis, Tenka promises to feature completely 3D polygon-based enemies, which will make the flat, pixellated characters in titles like Doom and Alien Trilogy, pale by comparison. The story has you playing the role of an armed and dangerous "twisted freak" from an off-world colony. You must fight your way through a manufacturing plant filled with out-of-control cyborgs who are determined to eradicate you. Tenka promises to go beyond the standard fare of 3D shooters, by introducing a history of events and an evolving plotline. Missions will vary from the simple "kill or be killed" to much more detailed tasks. Of course, there will be plenty of super-powered weapons at your disposal, including automatic weapons, lasers, mini rocket launchers and homing missiles.

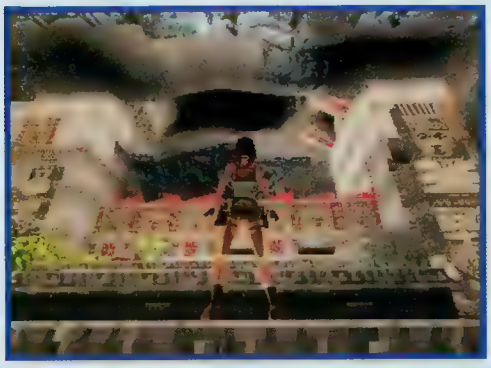


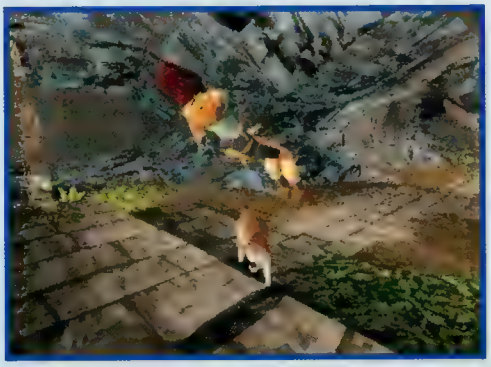
EXPECTING

# TOMB RAIDER

**EIDOS • AVAILABLE DECEMBER**

There's not much left to say about this drop-dead amazing title which we have been either previewing or showcasing since May, but every time we get treated to a new version, we just have to share it with our readers. So, what's new in this latest rev? First off, Lara can now look up and down, as well as left and right — allowing her to see treacherous drops and dangerous traps. There are now lightsourced catacombs filled with water which she can swim through and she now automatically aims at the nearest enemy. Lara also jumps just about every which way (including backwards) and she is able to grab hold of a ledge and then pull herself up (kind of like a 3D Prince of Persia). We'll probably have more before the game is reviewable, but, can you blame us?

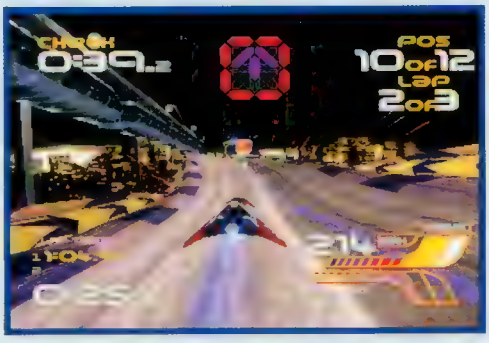




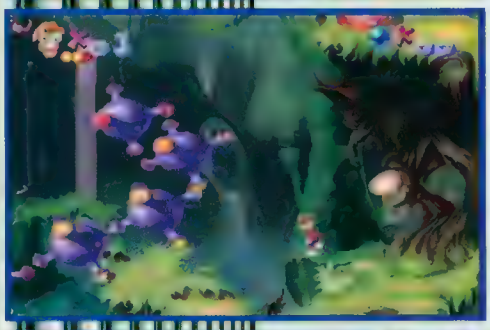
# WIPEOUT XL

**PSYGNOSIS • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER**

WipeOut XL is the logical sequel to last year's, love-it or hate-it, futuristic racer. Set to be released sometime before Christmas, WipeOut XL hopes to define the standard for the second generation of 32bit PlayStation games by pushing the hardware to its limits. This time 'round, expect many new techniques and features to be implemented which will showcase the PS's eye-popping special effects capabilities. As in the original, WipeOut XL pits the player against the fierce competition of Anti-Gravity racing on six all-new tracks, except there's now 15 racers (as opposed to the original eight) utilizing 11 weapons (up from an original six), through four racing classes (twice the original.) Other enhancements include checkpoints and pit-stops, the ability to actually destroy your opponents (as well as yourself) and knock them out of the race, all-new, unbelievable weapons, special "light trailing" effects and tighter control over your craft. The main focus of WipeOut XL's developers, is to take the original game much further, with a host of new skills to master for the seasoned veteran and novice player alike.



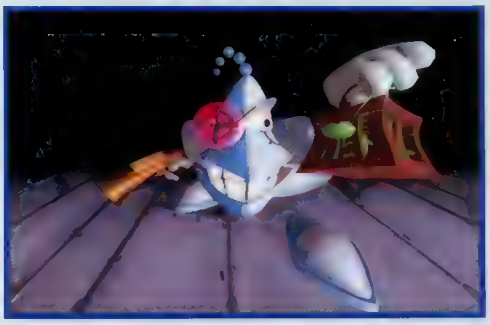

SPEEDS FAST ENOUGH TO
TRIGGER THE DUAL AIR BAGS IN YOUR CHEST.

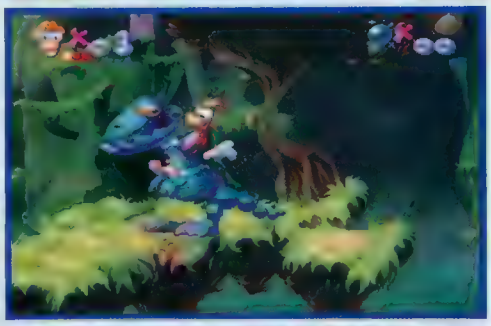


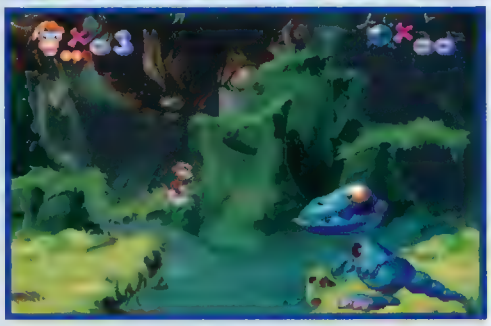
# RAYMAN II

**UBI SOFT • AVAILABLE 4TH QUARTER**

Rayman is coming back to the PlayStation, sometime this Winter, starring in his own sequel, Rayman II. That's right! The comical, bug-eyed superhero is returning to battle a band of wacky space robots who want to turn all the colorful landscapes in Rayman's magical world into a gray expanse of steel and iron. The giant percussion drums, living musical notes and other natives from the original game are now locked up in zoos, as showpieces for the pleasure of the invaders, and the androids themselves are equipped with superior intelligence that enables them to react according to Rayman's responses and choice of weaponry. It's you against Mr. Dark, the elusive opponent who escaped at the end of the first Rayman. Rayman II features all-new graphics, worlds and music and Rayman has a host of new powers and abilities. This new version also adds more hidden levels, more bonus maps and retains the stunning 60 fps animation, lush colors and the same non-violent approach that gave the original its mass-market appeal.







# STREET RACER DELUXE

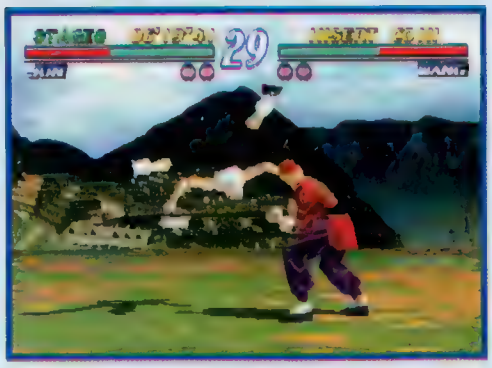
**UBI SOFT • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER**

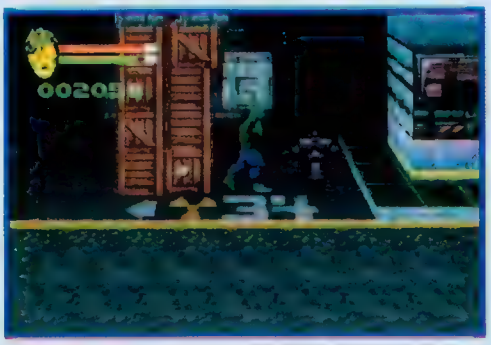
Street Racer, a somewhat obscure racing game that was released on the Super NES a few years back, has spawned a new 32-bit sequel, titled, aptly enough, Street Racer Deluxe. For those of you unfamiliar with the original Street Racer, it was similar to Mario Kart, in that it used generous amounts of Mode 7, a third person, behind the car perspective, racing mixed with street combat, and a kooky cast of cartoon characters. Although the PlayStation sequel still retains the origial concepts and ideas, it has been greatly improved upon. Street Racer Deluxe features 24 seperate tracks, five different gameplay modes (including up to eight-player simultaneous split-screen play with the use of two multi-taps), four skill levels, smooth, texture mapped, 3D graphics and multiple racing perspectives. The ultimate goal here is simple: finish in first, using any means necessary, and leave your opponents in the dust.

# TEKKEN 2

**NAMCO • AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER**

Prepare to be blown away this September, as Tekken 2 is on its way from the arcades to your PlayStation. If you're at all familiar with the original Tekken, expect more characters, more moves, more mind-boggling special effects and animation, improved graphics, pin-point control, hidden secret characters and tricks, as well as a huge variety of new features, including a practice mode where you can see all of the moves you are executing represented via on-screen icons. As with the original Tekken, the sequel outdoes its arcade counterpart, with an all-new two minute CG rendered intro, as well as endings for each and every character. We will be back next month with the complete review.

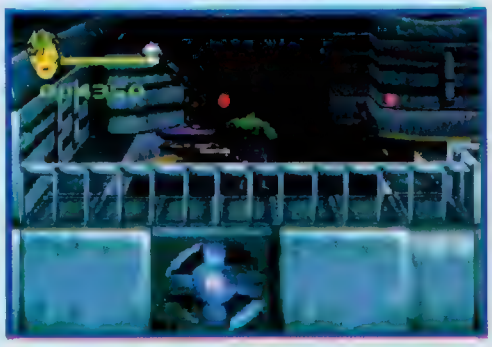


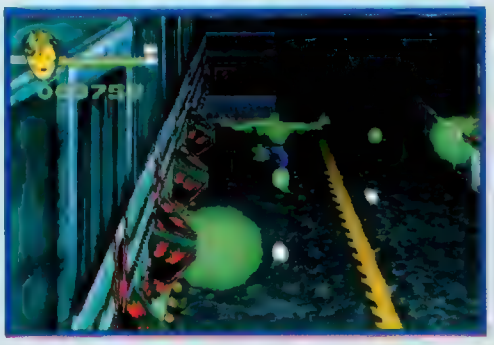


# INCREDIBLE HULK

**EIDOS • AVAILABLE DECEMBER**

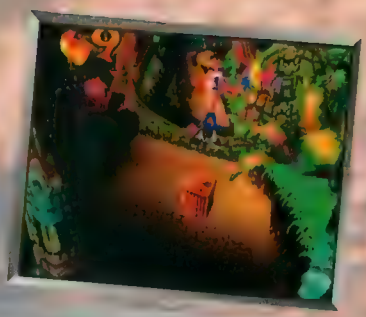
Eidos Interactive, the result of the merging of software publishers US Gold and Domark Software, has a number of PlayStation titles in store for gamers this holiday season, including the game shown here, The Incredible Hulk (based on Marvel's best-selling comic book hero.) This isn't the first time the Hulk has appeared in his own video game (US Gold produced a SNES and Genesis title a few years back), but it's the first time he's been done in 3D, and there are high expectations from both Eidos and Marvel to bring together an awesome title. In the game, you control the Hulk's every powerful move, as he embarks on 14 action-packed levels, tackling all of his infamous foes. The Hulk has over 50 different actions at his disposal, including: head butts, body bats, pile punches and flying kicks. The gameplay is non-linear and created from SGI rendered, 3D models and is played out in a third-person perspective.





FORMULA 1, THE GAME.
START YOUR PLAYSTATION THIS SEPTEMBER.
PSYGNOSIS
PlayStation

# CRASH BANDICOOT

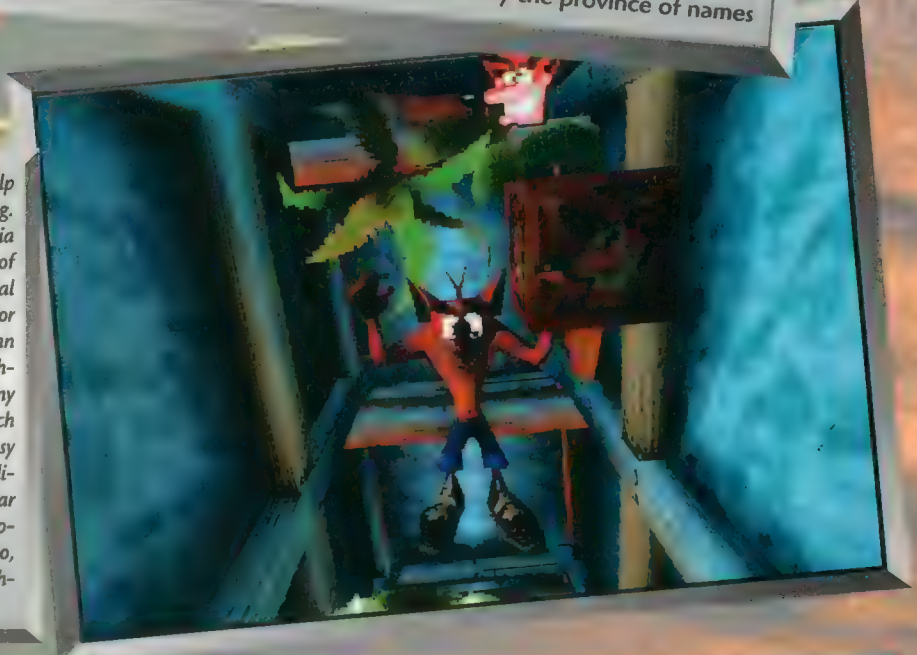


## LOOKS TO CONQUER THE WORLD!

### OF PLUMBERS, HEDGEHOGS AND BANDICOOTS

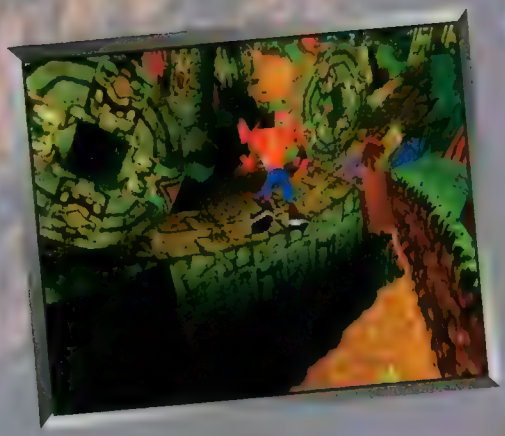
In the short, modern history of video gaming (for our purposes, we will define "modern" as anything since the arrival of Nintendo's 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) on American shores in 1985), every successful hardware platform has had a character that helped define the game system for the consumer. What links these characters and games in history is: first and foremost, they were all great games, they became associated with the gaming system AFTER they had penetrated the existing installed user base in unparalleled numbers (in other words, not a bunch of marketing hype and a hippy-zippy character that preceded the release of a so-so game) and that the gaming systems, ultimately, would achieve dominant market share during their respective generations.

It all started with Mario and the NES. The Italian plumber, as unlikely of a spokesmen as one could ever imagine, captured hearts and imaginations of 8-14 year olds (and the pocket books of their parents) the world over during the '80's, with great gameplay and a ton of hidden secrets. In 1990-91, Sega went from an 8-bit also-ran (accounting for a paltry 5% of the American marketplace with its Master System) to 16-bit co-champions with the frenetically-paced "Sonic the Hedgehog." At last glance, Sonic was appearing on everything from Life Savers candy to little boys' underwear! These characters went beyond the electronic bounds of their interactive worlds, to stake a claim in the worlds of entertainment, marketing and advertising — the likes of which have, historically, been solely the province of names



***Editor's Note:*** *This month's cover feature was made possible with the help of a bunch of folks from Sony, Universal Interactive and Naughty Dog. They are, in no particular order: Molly Smith, Connie Booth, David Gracia and Amy Matsumura-Blaire, from Sony Computer Entertainment of America, Kelly Flaherty, Mark Cerny and David Siller, from Universal Interactive, and Jason Rubin, Andy Gavin, Dave Baggett, Bob Rafei, Taylor Kurosaki, Dan Kollmorgen, Justin Monast, Charlotte Francis and Morgan the dog, from Naughty Dog. The market and game analysis was put together by Dave Winding and the interview was conducted with Mark Cerny and Jason Rubin, by Dave Winding and Greg Off, on June 6, 1996. Much of the game and technical information found in the feature is courtesy of the Naughty Dog members mentioned above. You can expect an editorial review of Crash in our September issue, and for the game to appear at retail on Septemer 9, 1996 — the one year anniversary of the introduction of the PlayStation to American consumers. Without further ado, we give you, straight from a successful engagement down under, the Crashter, the "uga-buga" man, the main marsupial ... Crash Bandicoot!*

EXTREME



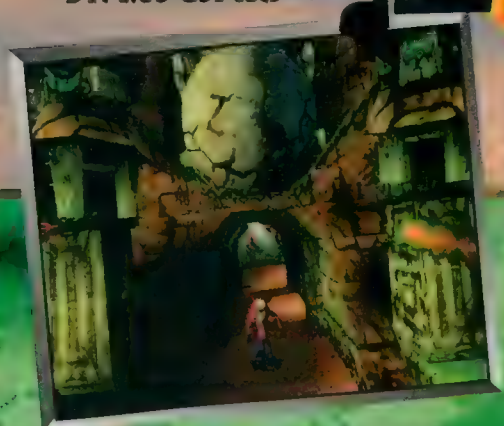
like Disney, Marvel, McDonald's and Warner Brothers. Today, the name and likeness recognition of both Sonic and Mario are almost unchallenged among their target demographic.

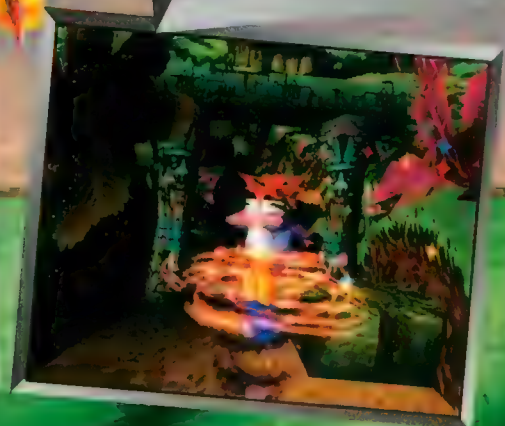
We now find ourselves in the middle of 1996, with Sony's PlayStation as the market-dominant gaming system, heading toward the turn of the century. And the game featured in this expanded edition of *EXTREME*, is the heir-apparent to the character game throne: Sony's "Crash Bandicoot." What makes this game/character special? Well, borrowing from history, it has all of the elements that make it possible to succeed on a Mario/Sonic level, save one (more on that later).

## THE GAME'S THE THING

To begin with, Crash Bandicoot redefines what we expect a PlayStation game to look like. The high-resolution graphics, beautiful colors, immense number of polygons and detailed character animation go far beyond anything we have come to expect in PlayStation software (and we expect a lot.) And it is given to us in a real-time, three-dimensional world, although our access to the world has been limited for gameplay purposes. Second, it takes an existing gameplay theme and gives it a new twist — combining the discovery and secrets found in the Mario and Donkey Kong Country series', with a quicker pace. From the moment you see or play the game, you KNOW that you want to be in Crash's world. Third, the character has what the marketing folks like to refer to as "attitude". He's quick, he's cool and he can make you laugh. With a quick spin or jump, or the mere twitching of an eye brow, Crash can communicate all that he needs to — giving the game player (or potential customer) some insight into Crash's sense of humor, confidence and general goofiness. Lastly, the game has that intangible "feel" to it. This is something game designers and programmers struggle with in every game they do. It is almost impossible to define, and comes across only when the game controller is resting in your hands — you know whether or not a game has "it", the instant you begin play ... Crash Bandicoot has "it" down cold. The game is simplicity itself —

Dr. Neo Cortex →

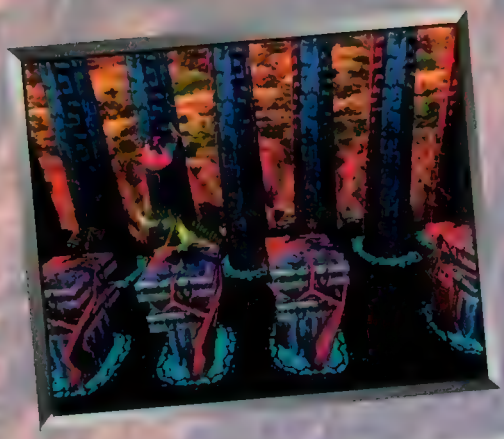




you collect apples (100 of them will earn you an extra Crash), jump and spin on enemies, platforms and power-ups, and collect colored gems (allowing you access to secret areas of the game.) In addition, Crash runs away from giant boulders, rides wart hogs and is the central focus in all kinds of craziness. The game is played over three different islands, as you do battle against the evil Dr. Cortex and his minions. The screen shots placed in this feature are from islands one and two. (When Greg and I were down at Universal for the interview part of this feature, we got to see island 3, which is HUGE — and it becomes even more amazing, as you make your way inside Dr. Cortex's castle and laboratory — more on that when we review the game in next month's issue.) More gameplay: If you collect three special cards in a level, you are allowed to access the bonus level — where extra lives are plentiful. That's it! While very similar, in concept, to Nintendo's Donkey Kong series (where the designers would require that a player find all of the secret areas to get a 100% score in the game), the play environment and spot-on control in Crash make it feel like an entirely new concept and Crash, as a character, more unique.

Ripper Roo

EXTREME



## THE MAKING OF A STAR

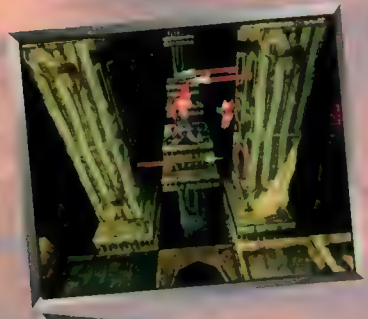
So, what's that missing element? Well, remember the 8-14 demographic that we mentioned earlier? It doesn't quite exist in mass-market numbers for the PlayStation ... yet. As we all know, Sony just dropped the retail price of the PlayStation to $199. The market situation that they find themselves in is not unlike the position that Sega of America was in, in 1990. The Genesis was selling for $189; had been well-received in the million or so American homes that had shelled out the big bucks (mostly from the deeper-pocket 18-34, adult male crowd.) Sonic came, Sonic conquered the existing installed user base, the word spread, the next fiscal year came, the price of the Genesis went down to $149 and Sonic became the system pack-in. The rest is well-recorded history; the Genesis is now in over 20 million US homes and Sonic is a household word.

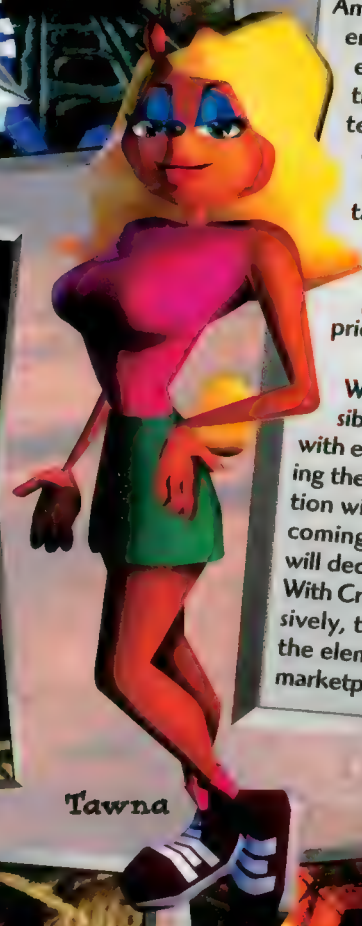
Will Sony attempt to duplicate this strategy to gain mass-market acceptance? Only time will tell. It certainly makes sense. Sony has been very aggressive in their pricing strategy for the PlayStation and they certainly don't intend to come in second in the hardware wars. The simple answer is that both a platform-defining title and the proper hardware pricing structure have to be in place for the plan to be successful.

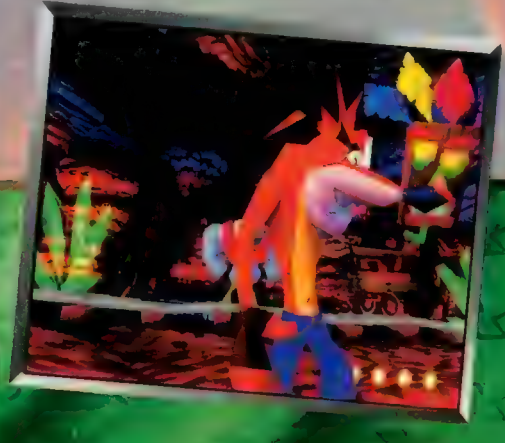
## FINAL THOUGHTS ON WORLD DOMINATION

We can expect that Sony will let the Crash momentum build at a sensible pace, giving the game and marketing plan a chance to catch fire with existing PlayStation owners and those that will buy the hardware during the '96 holiday season. After the first of the year, the market information will be available to determine whether or not Crash is the "second coming" and if the mass market has joined the party. This is when Sony will decide how to use Crash in '97 and beyond.

With Crash, Tekken 2 and GameDay '97 all coming to the PlayStation, exclusively, this fall, coupled with the $199 price tag of the hardware, all of the elements are in place for Sony to take control of the console gaming marketplace — and for Crash to lead the way ... jumping and spinning!







A conversation with

# The Creators

## of Crash Bandicoot

**PSEX:** Tell us about the origins of Naughty Dog and Crash.

**Jason Rubin (Naughty Dog):** ND's last project was Way of the Warrior (a one-on-one fighting game for the 3DO.) We came out here (to Los Angeles, CA and Universal Interactive) as a two person team: Andy Gavin and I. We didn't want to do another project that was done by two people on a tight budget. Universal Interactive offered us not only a larger budget, but a lot more. They offered us Mark Cerny's talents and Mark's history in the video game industry. They offered us anything around the studio lot to use. And, they offered us the ability to attract talent that we could mix with Andy's and my talents and, hopefully, create a bigger, better project, than Way of the Warrior, although I thought Way of the Warrior was great for what it was.

We wanted to attack a genre; the biggest of which is definitely the character based action game. Although, I think fighting games have had a great transition from 2D to 3D, it was very easy, from a gameplay standpoint and I think it (the transition) has been extremely successful, I think driving games have, likewise, had an extremely easy transition from 2D to 3D.

When we studied Crash, there was no 3D game, in the character platform game genre, on the market at all and we didn't expect that, or we expected them, but we hadn't heard of any that had been initiated. We knew that there was Clockwork Knight, but it was more of a 2D game with a bunch of 3D backgrounds. We knew that there was something called Bug on the horizon, however we had absolutely no idea what it was, but we did know it was going to have a 2D character. We decided that we wanted to do something that was entirely 3D. We wanted to take the genre, as the driving/fighting games had been taken, from 2D to 3D, without, and this was the challenge, losing the gameplay and the action inherent to a great character based action game. That's hard, because, in a fighting game, you're trying to get as close to one other person as you can. So, the arena's small, there is not much room to move within, you can't really get out of it. In a driving game, even though they've been 2D, they are naturally in 3D; it comes without any effort. But, in the character based action game, we found, when we started trying to put everything together, that it was very easy to destroy the action by going around it and, if you had a choice between going head-to-head with something and going around it, you just go around it and, in a way, you start to ruin the game.

Naughty Dog's Jason Rubin

As we had guessed, and soon found out, it's very hard to design levels, and our initial effort proved that theory. It's very hard to design a level, if you can't control where a character is going ... very hard.

So, after a lot of soul searching, a lot of code, a lot of levels that were thrown out; in fact, as it turns out, exactly one year after we began the project, which was October 1994, we really began to create Crash. So it was .... let's say, ten months after we began, before the first level (it actually remains in the game) was ready. This means that there

Exec.Producer Mark Cerny

EXTREME

was literally a period of time, while we were designing the first level, where someone else could have brought to market a competing game within the category — that is how we started.

PSEX: In looking at the game, there is a lot of technology that we have never seen before. Can you give us an idea of how you went about building the game?

JR: When we started, we knew what other people were going to say: "Well, this is a good idea — this is the biggest genre in history, Mario has sold more than any other game", etc. I think what happened, in the end, is that four teams, Nintendo, with Mario 64, Accolade and Eidetic with Bubsy 3D, ourselves, and Crystal Dynamics with Pandemonium, decided what they wanted, in creating a next-generation platform game, and all came up with very different results. The question is, are any of them better? I don't know if any of them are better. They're definitely different and I think, in the end, it's great, because one of these directions may take the lead and say, hey, this is where it should go. On the other hand, maybe all three directions are valid. Maybe, in 3D, you have more options; maybe you can do more. I definitely think, however, that Crash is far different from these other games.

It was really important to us that we created a character that was not only visible, but was also non-polygonal looking and non-video game looking; something that looked like a character that just happened to be in a video game, not a bunch of polygons thrown together. I think we have done a pretty good job with the hardware. And there are a lot of things we did to accomplish that. When we started, we had Crash's character at the same size and same resolution of polygons, but we didn't have a shadow that he cast on the ground; we didn't have some of the other tricks we've pulled with the environment around him to link him to the world, and it looked like a bad cartoon. My definition of a bad cartoon is a foreground and a background, where the foreground moves and doesn't look like the background has anything to do with it. It took a lot to marry the two together. If you go by a tree and there's a shadow on the ground, you should be dark and I think we're one of the only games out there that is doing that right now.

Mark Cerny (Universal): Also, Crash does show something that Mario 64, to pick one of the games that Jason referred to earlier,

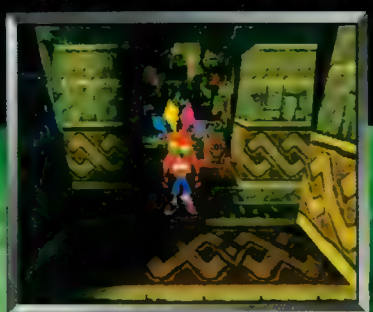
A 3 island tour... (to the tune of Gilligan's Island)

can't. Crash has close to one million polygons and there just isn't enough data on the Nintendo 64 cartridge to handle this level of detail. And it is very expensive. Not only is Crash a great game, but it reinforces CD-ROM as the most flexible and cheapest, delivery medium.

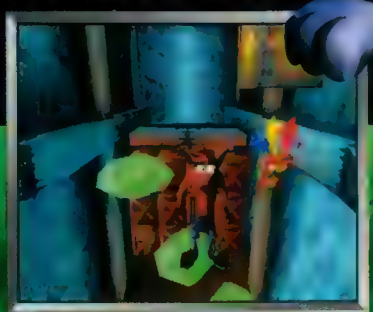
JR: Geometry is just one of the issues. We have, in each one of the levels, six to eight megabytes of textures — they have eight to sixteen megabyte cartridges. So, how many levels can you put on a cartridge? There's sound and music and everything else on there, as well. If you take each piece of a level, we're already half a cartridge; if you start adding up all the pieces of the level, you're way beyond a cartridge. There's 64 megs of textures in the game. At 16 megs, which is the biggest N64 cartridge I've heard

Koala Kong

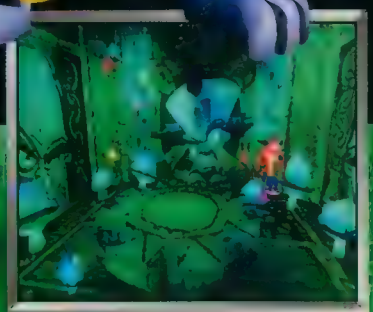
A typical bonus round



"Crash look good ... Crash feel good!"



Gems open up all new areas



One of the game's many secret places

mentioned, that's huge and expensive. Nintendo is talking about a 64 DD drive; it's going to have 64 megs of storage capacity. We're at 64 megs of textures in Crash, that's JUST the textures, without any geometry to sit on top of! We believe that we have achieved a level of technology, with Crash, that the competition simply can't deliver.

PSEX: Now that you've broached the subject of Nintendo and Mario 64, Crash's world allows the player to move freely within the environment, but with restrictions. Each level gives the player different barricades that keep him on a certain path. Miyamoto and his team have taken a different approach in Mario 64 — allowing the player to roam and explore mapped areas, much like games such as Doom and Magic Carpet. What was your design rationale in taking more control over the play environment?

JR: When we started, we made the decision to make Crash more of a classic action/platform game than an open, 3D exploration game. That decision gave us a lot of advantages. We can take advantage of that to make our trees 3D. In Mario 64, the trees are 2D. They're in a 3D world but, if you notice, as you are running around a tree, it simply rotates. It's flat, it's a Doom-like, four year old technology. But, they have a "Z" buffer (this technology allows the N64 to calculate character and object placement and movement along a third axis). So, when you jump into it, it sort of looks 3D and that is a very big advantage for them. But, it is a 2D tree; they don't have enough data to store all that stuff, to store all the 3D, and it's very hard for them to deal with the 3D from all angles, while allowing the player to move freely in an open environment. What we did is to create a game that's just like the classics ... a more directed flow and look. It's not just the gameplay that improves, but there are also a lot of other things that can improve as well.

For example, we like Warner's characters in the foreground. Background-wise, their style is pretty sparse — what were we going to do? It's the characters that make Warner survive. The backgrounds are neat, but the characters are brilliant and they make Warner Brothers. Disney has a great amount of talent in their backgrounds. If you go back to Snow White and look at the backgrounds, you're in a world and what they're doing is



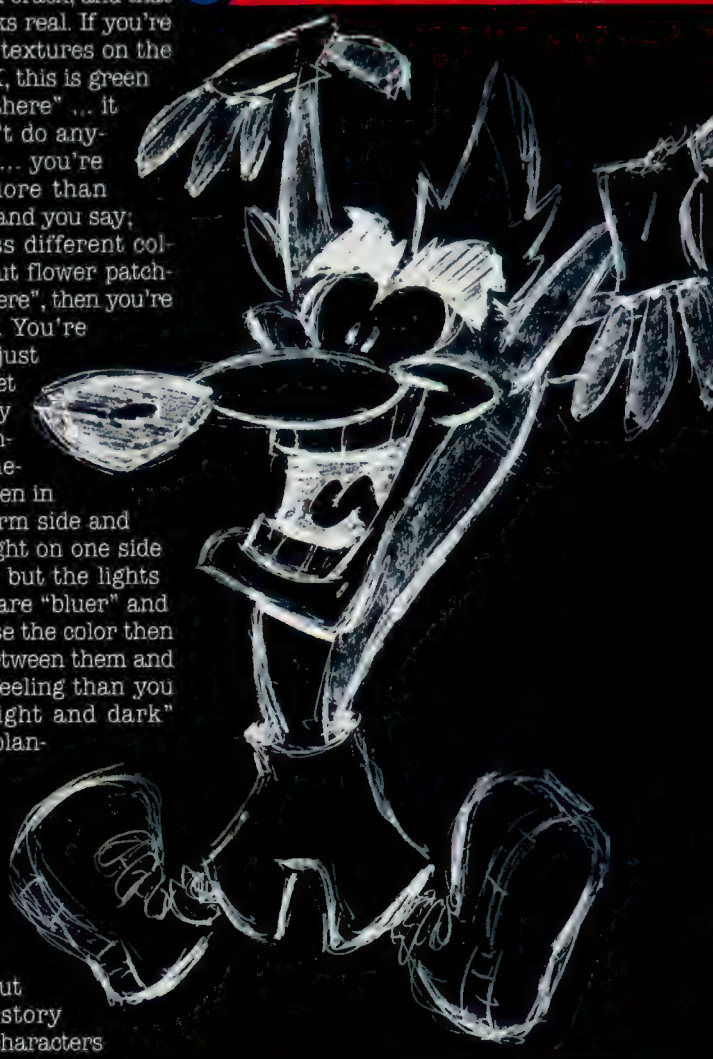
getting artists who have a talent for light and shadow, for depth of field, for directed flow of your attention. These are things that Warner never really thought about when they were doing their stuff. They did klunky shapes, very abstract, stylized worlds. And it's a valid approach, certainly, but it wasn't what we were looking for; we were looking for art and one of the nice things about having a directed flow is that we can say: "OK you're going into a specific area, we're going to cast this shadow that's going to create this darkness"; next to it we can put a light; we can direct the flow of your eye; we can do the things an artist does with a still image. I think that people who were doing full motion video games had hoped that they could accomplish this — let's make a movie with movie quality, but it's a game. Their problem was that they couldn't get the game part right.

We hope we've gotten that movie look. To a certain extent, we definitely want to be a cartoon, we're not trying to be any sort of film. But we hope we achieved that sort of look and, at the same time, that we have all the gameplay of the classics. Our art director, Bob Rafei, wanted something organic, which has really never been done well in a 3D game. So, by bringing things closer and closer to you, we had more and more capabilities; we could use our polygons in wiser ways. The

texture maps would be more evident, as opposed to pushing them off in the background and watching them fade-out, blur and lose pixels. This was actually the turning point of the project. We said, hey, if we can script the character to go down a path, we can create art. We can create something that you can pause the game and be impressed by the images. If you pause Crash and you look at the shadows, and you notice that Crash is in the shadows, and you look at things like that and you see the leaves and this leaf is the right shape and the right color to lead your eye in, that is very different than anything else I've seen or played. Classically, video game designers, in games like Pac Man and Asteroids, weren't thinking art, they were thinking gameplay. Which, at that time, was all they could do — and they did it brilliantly. We wanted to start with that kind of gameplay experience and create a beautiful world to contain it. So, we said "why fight it, let's just go with this (the game's structured flow)."

PSEX: In talking about the look of the game, Crash's world seems to be "living", in the sense that there looks to be a greater level of attention to detail. This focus seems to have produced a more vibrant play environment than we have yet to experience. Was this 'organic' approach to Crash's world one of the major focuses of your development effort?

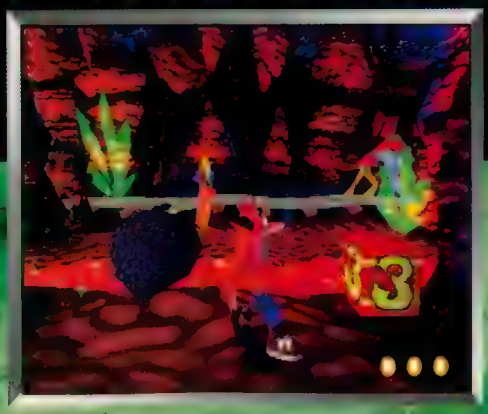
JR: Definitely. We could have gone with any of a million styles out there and, for a long time, we did explore different styles. The ruins are a good example of our approach. The idea behind the ruins is that, if you have a snow level and you have a beach level and you have an inside the building level, how do you tie them together? The ruins were simply an idea; OK, let's say there was an ancient civilization, they were around whenever they made ruins, the ruins are all over the place. So, from one level to the next, the ruins are showing you and telling you that you're still in the same world. The other thing we did is to design absolutely everything on paper before we actually got into it. This is where the details that you spoke of are coming from. All of the textures are designed from the beginning, how everything is going to look, and that is extremely useful because the texture is not only that texture, it also adds polygons. If you use your texture map right, you can create a bevel or you can create a crack that isn't actually a polygonal crack, and that gives you something that looks real. If you're just randomly putting noise textures on the ground, like green grass; "OK, this is green grass so let's put green on there" ... it doesn't change color, doesn't do anything, it's just green grass ... you're not really adding much more than noise. If you think about it, and you say; "Well, I can make this grass different colors as it goes along, I can put flower patches here and flower patches there", then you're actually adding something. You're adding flowers to what was just grass and you can actually get a lot if you pre-plan. In every level, we began with a graphic goal in mind. This is something that I haven't really seen in many games. We have a warm side and a cold side. Not only is it light on one side and dark on the other side, but the lights are "redder" and the darks are "bluer" and that's nice, very nice, because the color then blends across the gradient between them and you get a much more real feeling than you get from a more basic, "light and dark" approach. This conceptual planning and our focus on creating a theme in Crash's world is what, I believe, makes our product unique.

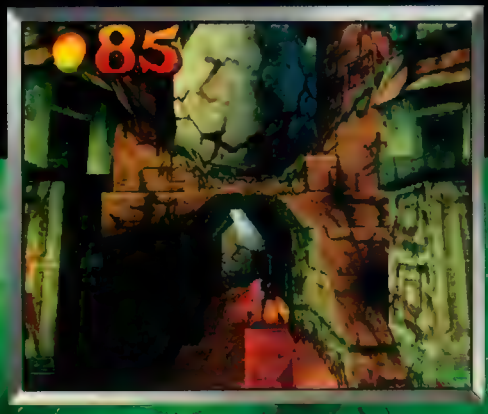


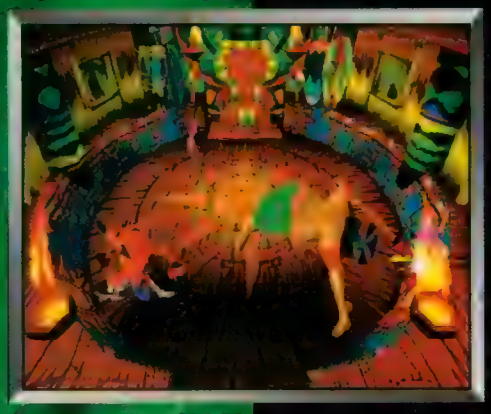
PSEX: We've talked about the origins of, and technology behind, Crash. Now, we'd like to talk to you about the game itself and the story behind Crash and the other characters that inhabit his world.

JR: I don't exactly remember the order we went in when we were creating the characters, but I know that Crash came last, he was finalized last ... he was the hardest. The one that we had the most fun with, early-on, was Cortex, because, in a lot of ways, he has to drive the game. We had a very bizarre approach to the whole thing, we felt he was a genius. He was a maniac. He was going to do the thing he was going to do, but we felt we had to make a character that looked and felt like he understood that he was in a video game doing the things he was doing — more like a chess master, answering to somebody; "I'm insane, I'm ugly, people throw me out

"Indiana" Crash?







of the world, what am I going to do? ... go out and create an army of animals!" It is cliché and that's something I think really bugs him. In fact, early plans were that he was going to turn to the screen and do asides and stuff and then we decided not to do cut scenes, since we thought it broke the action. But, we were going to have him actually turn to the screen and say: "Oh, here he comes, there's nothing I can do, why even bother, go get him" ... you know, stuff like that. Cortex comes from a desire to create a character that was extremely emotional — he knows himself, he knows the situation he's in and yet he still finds himself living and the life he leads is very, very emotional.

Crash had to be designed both from the front and the back. We brought in people from the cartoon studios here. We brought in some cartoon animators because we figured video games are now 15 - 20 years old. Cartoons are a lot older and the studios have been doing characters since the beginning, whereas video game designers weren't doing characters so much as gameplay. So, we figured the people that you could mine for knowledge are going to be from the cartoon industry. We brought them in to help us and we created a character who was not only video game friendly, but also friendly past video games. If you create a character whose sole trait is that he's fast, he doesn't have much of a personality beyond that. You look at him, he looks fast, he moves fast, then the game's fast ... that's a pitfall. Because, if you go beyond video games, you have to have more of a personality. If you're going to spend time with Saturday morning cartoons, fast stuff doesn't cut it; it's got to be more than that. So, we worked with Universal to create a character that could go beyond fast, or beyond spinning. Whatever he was to become, he had to have a wide range of emotions. Crash is our answer, and it took the team 2-1/2 months to come up with the final character. Then, there's the girlfriend (Tawna), which had to be in there, as well. Cortex knows that and that's what pisses him off. But, he does his duty and he holds her up in the castle. Tawna went through a lot of revisions, so we have a lot less of her than we do of any of the characters.

**Papu Papu**
**(from the Latin; Buttikus Crackus)**

MC: As far as the game goes, and the story behind it, there are three islands, there are six bosses and twenty six game rounds. The first island has one boss, the second has two and the third has three. What you are seeing (in the pre-release software given to PSExtreme for this feature) is the first 60% of the final product; not too much is changing there. We have designed the game so that the player can quickly accumulate quite a few lives. The lives are set up to assist your flow through the game when you're playing it for the first time. Of course, you can go back at any time after a restart and replay old rounds and get the lives out of those rounds. If your interest is in getting 99 lives, you can do that. In terms of gameplay balance, the number of lives that an expert player can accumulate is moot to me. Just as an example; in the Super Mario series, you could go to the first round, play it, get three lives, and do that until you had 99 of them and proceed again. Is this an impediment to tuning? Absolutely not! I think the brilliance of that series speaks for itself. So, how does one determine how many lives should be scattered throughout the game? Well, it's a question of when a fresh consumer comes to the product and is playing the game to get through it, to see what is in there, to reach the end, to get to that ending — how many lives are necessary to establish game balance, to make it fun? The second issue is the replay value, which, in Crash, has to do with collecting gems. You get gems by completing a round perfectly, without dying, and by breaking all of the boxes on that level. There are 26 rounds, there are 26 gems, 6 of them have color. The colored gems are on the third island ... so you go to the third island and then you come back.

PSEX: In terms of looking at the overall structure of the game, how long do you expect the average gamer to take to get through point A to point Z by blasting through the game and how long should it take to discover everything that's in the game?

MC: I know somebody who went from the start to the end of Donkey Kong the first time ever in 3 hours and 26 minutes. So, the question of how many hours is very dangerous; there's a lot of rhetoric floating around and I've also heard, by the same token, that Mario 64 will take 200 hours to finish. I have difficulty believing that anyone will maintain interest in a video game for 200 hours. So, I don't have an hour figure. What's important is that we don't say to the player, "you're done". What's important is that the player can establish when THEY are done with the game — perhaps that's when they finished

Jason Rubin | Andy Gavin | Dave Baggett | Bob Rafei | Taylor Kurosaki | Justin Monast | Charlotte Francis

the game at the end of the day, perhaps when they've gone through and finished 60% of the game, perhaps it's when they've managed to accumulate half of the gems (which will take quite a bit of time). I suspect there are a great number of people who will not finish the product.

JR: It's very difficult, these days, to balance games, because there are a lot of people coming in who have never played a video game before. Or, if they have, they've played driving/fighting games, 'cause that's all that's out there right now. At the same time, you've got a lot of people who have gone from Atari 2600s; these people can pick up a game and, no matter what it is, they are going to finish it in a few hours. That's the 3 hour and 26 minute guy. He's beaten everything, you can't throw tricks at him. He's seen it. If he hasn't seen it, it's either not possible or he can figure it out right then and there.

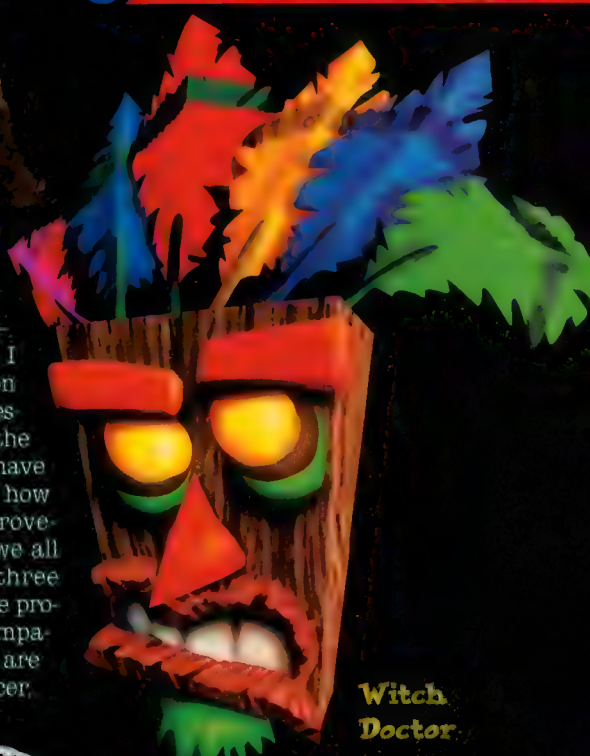
PSEX: In closing, how did the relationship between Universal and Naughty Dog come about and what is the nature of the relationship?

MG: Universal Interactive Studios started in 1994. The first two products were external, kind of "no touch" deals, for Jurassic Park Interactive and The Way of the Warrior. The Way of the Warrior was a very easy deal to make. I didn't make it but lines of people were waiting to buy it. So, Universal signed a deal for the product with Andy & Jason. They also talked Andy & Jason into coming out here for a housekeeping deal, which is a Hollywood thing. Jason had already spent some good time in Newport Beach, so he knew about California and wanted to come back. We basically told them: "here is an area to work, we'd like to first look at your products, we'd like an opportunity to pick them up if they're something we're interested in." In the summer of '94 I was the first product development person hired at Universal and I immediately realized that Andy & Jason were extremely talented. There is no question in my mind that Naughty Dog is the best team at getting stuff done that I have ever worked with. Sony can attest to how dramatic the change is, and the improvement has been, in the product since we all hooked up, which I think was just three months ago. Structurally, I am executive producer. David Siller, who joined the company in September of 1994, and who we are very happy to have, is Crash's producer.

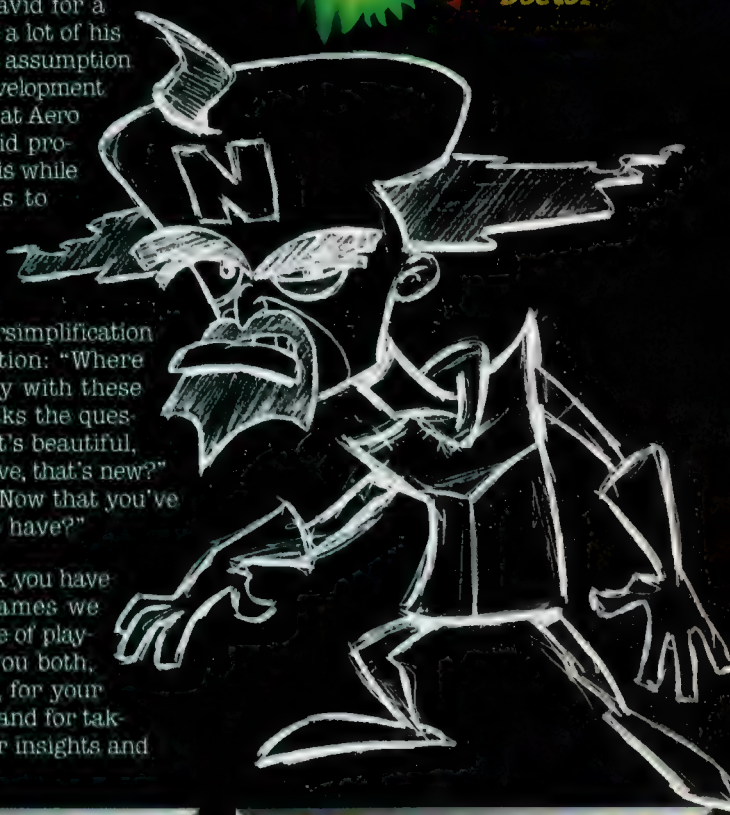
PSEX: We have known David for a few years and we can see a lot of his influence in Crash. Is this assumption valid, from a character development standpoint? Looking back at Aero the Acrobat, a game David produced for SNES and Genesis while at Sunsoft, Crash seems to have some of that same kind of appeal.

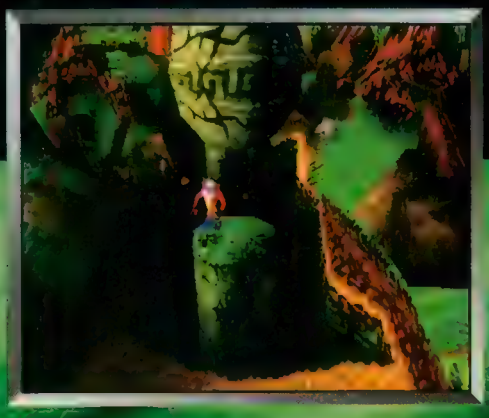
MG: In terms of roles on the project, this is an oversimplification but, Dave asks the question: "Where have we been historically with these games?" Naughty Dog asks the question: What can we do that's beautiful, that's fast, that's interactive, that's new?" And I ask the question: "Now that you've all done this, what do we have?"

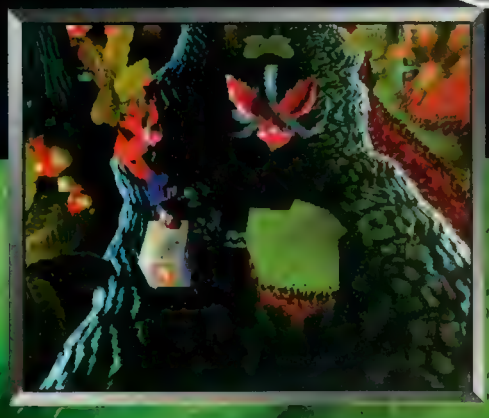
PSEX: In the end, we think you have one of the best video games we have ever had the pleasure of playing. We'd like to thank you both, on behalf of our readers, for your dedication to the process and for taking the time to share your insights and experiences.



Witch Doctor







# ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY PSYGNOSIS

After reviewing four soccer games in the past year, my brain has been completely drained of soccer-related jokes and puns, which means this is gonna be a rather boring review. My apologies in advance and I promise to get my staff of comedy writers cracking on new material.

So, anyway ... yeah. Adidas Power Soccer is the sixth freaking entry in the PlayStation's "Real" Football Sweepstakes and, at a cursory glance (love those big-word cliches), it seems oh-so-much like the others. You got yer 3D-polygon players, you got yer motion-captured animation, you got yer variety of viewpoints. But don't be fooled by the screen shots, because Adidas Power Soccer has a feature that you can't see: the "feel" of real soccer.

With naught but the Adidas license, Power Soccer doesn't feature national teams, but it does have 74 teams from three European countries: England, France and the Netherlands. Alas, one of the game's few (and major) flaws is that it doesn't display the strengths and weaknesses of the different teams — and if you know a soccer freak that can tell you if Paris SG is a better team than AS Monaco, introduce him to the nice men in the white suits immediately.

Power Soccer has single-game, tournament and season modes of play, substitutions for injured players, memory card backup of options and seasons in progress, instant replay (of the last five seconds of play), four-player support with the Multi Tap, four varying field conditions and four degrees of referee strictness. You can also play Power Soccer with an arcade or sim style of play; the arcade style moves faster and adds over half a dozen "special moves," such as superpowered kicks or yanking your opponent's shirt from behind to slow him down. The keenest part is that you have to discover the button presses for the moves by playing the game; neither the (excellent) in-game instructions nor the manual reveals the magic combos.

Power Soccer's greatest strength is the speed of the gameplay in the sim mode: not too fast as to be silly, not too slow as to be boring. You need to combine your passing, running, and tackling skills to succeed; this ain't a soccer game where you simply boot the ball upfield and go for the score. You have to time your passes, jump over tacklers and carefully weave through the defense. And, the excellent controls mean that you can't blame the button configuration, if you're getting your butt whipped.

With such a great gameplay engine, it's frustrating that Power Soccer has several little flaws. #1: The shot-on-goal controls. To lob the ball high, you press DOWN, and to kick low, you press UP—more like a flight sim than a sports game. (Once you get the hang of it, though, you can pull off some gorgeous shots.) #2: The bare-bones coaching options.

EXRATED

BIG part of soccer—just check out our U.S. national team, which likes to lob the ball downfield and hope that our taller dudes get their craniums on the ball first.

Power Soccer has a mere four viewpoints of the action, with four degrees of "zoom" in each: Virtual (a standard overhead-angle view), Pan (the camera stays in the middle of the field, HIGH above the action, and pans to follow the ball), Side (a 16-bitty side view) and Sky (a direct overhead view). The graphics are quite purty, with well-animated players and several cute touches in the arcade mode (tackled players see stars, the ball leaves behind a trail of smoke when it's kicked). The sound effects and music are okay and the sparse commentary (no player names) is repetitive, as always. Switch it off or enter the code that activates a vociferous pair of women who comment almost exclusively on the players' bums. Cheeky monkeys!

Power Soccer's gameplay engine rivals even the mighty FIFA 96, with its perfect pacing and variety of moves. With more (and more recognizable) teams, more strategic/coaching options and a couple of gameplay tweaks, this would slide easily into the hallowed halls of the Gold X. It's still a very spiffy title and the first PS soccer game to truly challenge FIFA 96 for the throne.

*Zach*

You can choose from seven different player formations, and, uh, that's it. #3: It's hard to tell when a player is injured and needs to be subbed out. #4: No headers! Players can kick long passes downfield, but their teammates always trap the ball with their chests. Headers are a

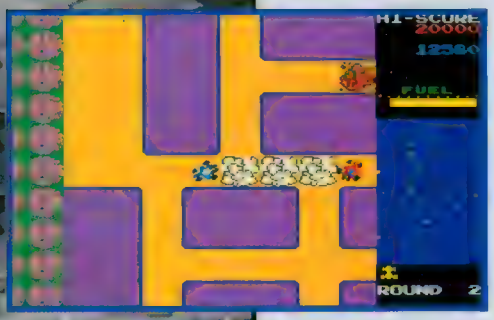
## THE BOTTOM LINE_

**89%**

**Power Soccer's gameplay engine rivals even the mighty FIFA 96, with its perfect pacing and variety of moves. With more (and more recognizable) teams, more strategic/coaching options and a couple of gameplay tweaks, this would slide easily into the hallowed halls of the Gold X. It's still a very spiffy title and the first PS soccer game to truly challenge FIFA 96 for the throne.**

# NAMCO MUSEUM: VOL. 1

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY NAMCO

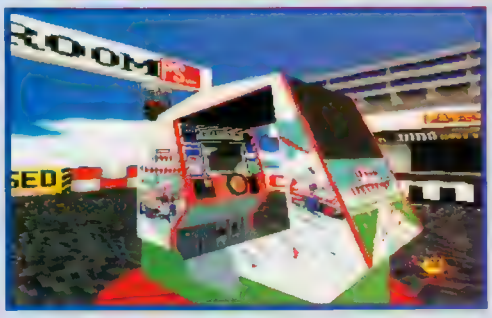


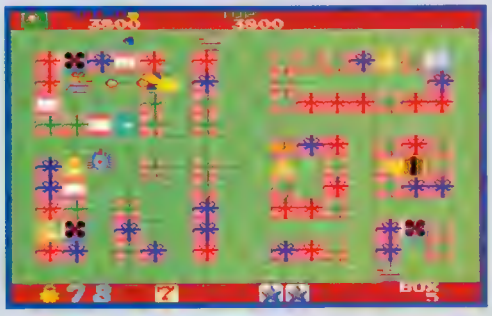
The great "retro-rewind", of classic arcade games, continues with the release of Namco Museum Vol. 1, due out by the time you read this. The compilation disc includes such all-time favorites as: Pole Position, Pac-man, Bosconian, Galaga and Rally-X. There are also a few not-so-classic emulations of Toypop and a "New" Rally-X. Besides the obvious draw of the high profile games, Namco tempts your buying impulses by offering a "Virtual Museum", through which the gamer can walk up to the exhibits (in this case, arcade standups) in real-time 3D and find out about the history of the game, what the designers original concepts were and many other interesting tidbits that make the whole experience even more entertaining. Let's take a look at how the translations play on the PlayStation.

Actually, the term "translation" is not accurate, as these games are the actual emulations of their arcade counterparts — and you know what that means, oui? Mias, bein sur, mon peteite applefritter! (Picture Dave Thomas saying that sentence and you get the true feeling for how it was intended!) Of course, the programmers for this compilation were nice enough to even give us access to the arcade dipswitches! You recall these little buggers —they allow you (or the arcade owner) to set the number of lives, or the points required for a free life, or whatever the variables were in that particular game, to whatever levels desired. Allowing the gamers to change variables certainly isn't anything new or fascinating, but the fact that Namco actually uses graphical representation of the dipswitches is a nice touch, as well.

First, let me erase any doubts concerning Pole Position and the steering "feel" from the standard control pad — there should be none! Pole Position plays so smoothly with the regular pad, that after hundreds of laps, I'm still amazed at the deftness and ease of control. I can hear it now "But what about the big turn (turn 4) where you used to just let the steering wheel fly?" No concerns, Pierré, 'cause it works almost identically with the standard controller. You simply let off the juice and quick tap left (twice), and you're through the fire.

EX RATED

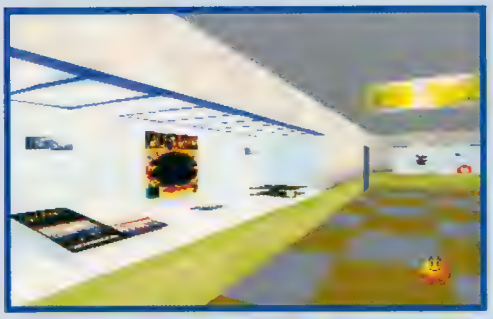




dropped a whole lot of quarters (well, not as many as some of my friends) into Galaga, but it's the title I find myself playing almost as much as Pole Position — and that's saying something! Rally-X and "New" Rally-X are X-cellent (how to pass that up, eh?), Pac-Man is, well, Pac-Man, and Bosconian plays fine as well. The only title I don't find myself spending time with is Toypop, but hey, five great titles for the price of one mediocre disc is a bargain everyday. Heck, I probably would have plunked down fifty green ones for Pole Position, all by itself!

All in all, Namco Museum Vol. #1 is a solid addition to any gamers library and, certainly, if you're old enough to remember playing these amazing games in the arcades, then this is a MUST buy. Lastly, one aspect that the "retro" games provide, that makes the purchase even more worthwhile, is the flood of memories they bring back — now how can you put a price tag on that? Go grab a copy and see what I mean!

*Eric*



Everything happens just the way you remembered it!

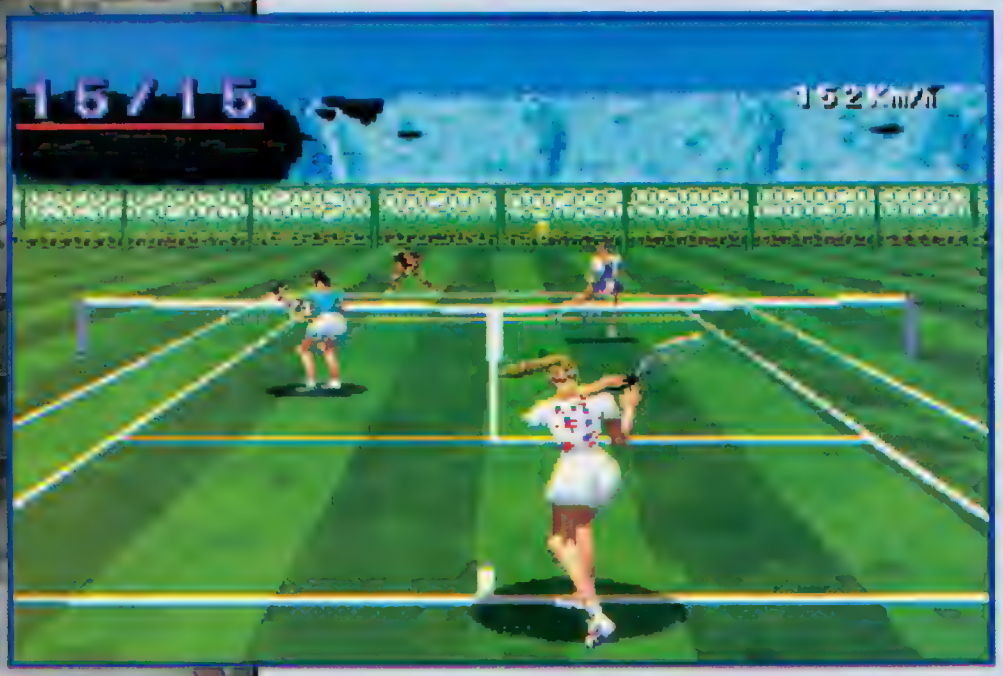
The balance of the titles all play perfectly, and none of the tunes or sound effects have been lost in the process. I must admit, I never

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

All in all, Namco Museum Vol. #1 is a solid addition to any gamers library and, certainly, if you're old enough to remember playing these amazing games in the arcades, then this is a MUST buy. Lastly, one aspect that the "retro" games provide, that makes the purchase even more worthwhile, is the flood of memories they bring back — now how can you put a price tag on that? Go grab a copy and see what I mean!

# V TENNIS

PUBLISHED BY ACCLAIM - DEVELOPED BY TONKINHOUSE




Being the avid tennis player that I am, I couldn't wait to get my hands on Acclaim's new game, V Tennis. My first volley with the game came at the recent E3 show in Los Angeles. I must admit, however, I wasn't that impressed. The game seemed slow and lacked any real tennis feel. So, when it arrived for our review, I moved it to the back of my in-box. Well, after playing it for the better part of two days, my opinion has changed substantially. So, stand by as I get ready to serve up some revised impressions.

Developed by the same folks who worked on the tennis titles for the SNES, V Tennis is Tonkin's first 32-bit offering. As you would expect, in a PlayStation game, the players are beautifully rendered in 3D polygon textures and perform their craft in similarly rendered arenas. The game allows you to choose between six different geographic locations in which to play, ranging from New York to Fiji. You have your choice of grass, clay, carpet and hard courts, as well as 16 different wannabe players. Additionally, you have

your choice of ten different camera angles, including an edit option which allows you to create your own unique angle, as well as instant replay from any perspective.

You can play, or watch, the game in a couple of settings ( singles or doubles). The first is match play, which allows you to play in the traditional environment, playing either 1,3 or 5 sets. If your competitive blood runs a little thicker, you can choose the tournament option. In tournament mode, the player starts out in the preliminary rounds, where you compete in one set matches. Once you have eliminated your three opponents in the prelims, you move onto league play, where you compete in three set matches. If you progress beyond the league play, you move into the finals, where you're playing on grass in front of a capacity crowd. Needless to say, V Tennis is packed with plenty of features; the questions is, do we have a playable title?

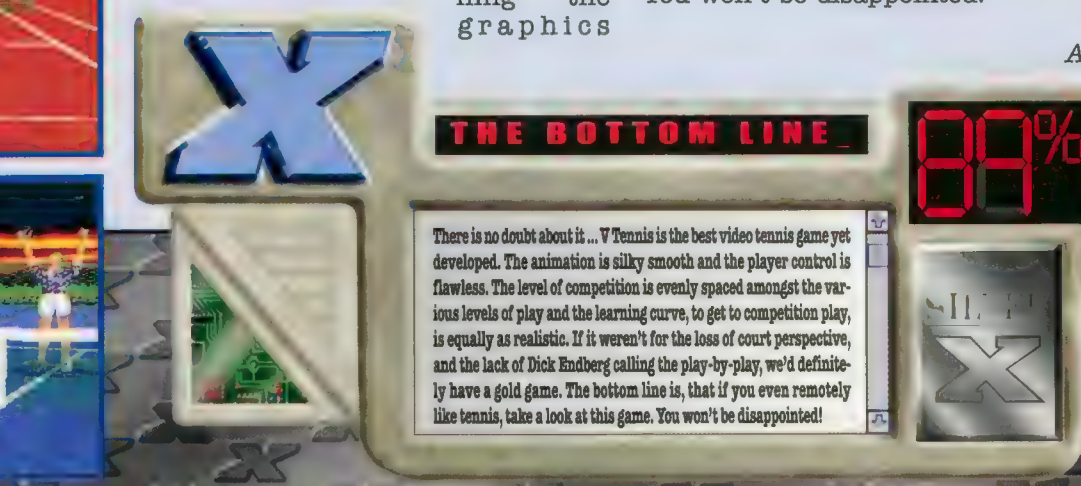
As I mentioned earlier, I love tennis, and when it comes to video tennis, I'm a hard one to please. Obviously, the most critical element is the gameplay,

EX RATED

but that doesn't mean you can overlook the visual aspects. Graphically, V Tennis runs hot and cold, depending on what camera angle you use. The closer you are to the court, the more stunning the graphics are. The unfortunate part is, you lose segments of the court, which make it harder to play. The farther away you are, the more it looks like something you'd find on 16 bit; however, you don't lose any of the court. There really is no happy medium; you either have gorgeous graphics or full size courts ... you make the call.From a gameplay perspective, however, you're in for a treat.

There is no doubt about it ... V Tennis is the best video tennis game yet developed. The animation is silky smooth and the player control is flawless. The level of competition is evenly spaced amongst the various levels of play and the learning curve, to get to competition play, is equally as realistic. If it weren't for the loss of court perspective, and the lack of Dick Endberg calling the play-by-play, we'd definitely have a gold game. The bottom line is, that if you even remotely like tennis, take a look at this game. You won't be disappointed!

*Alex*


THE BOTTOM LINE_
89%
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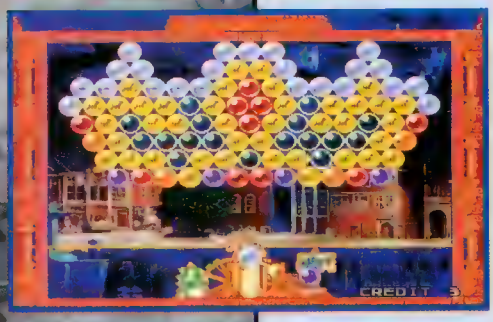
# BUST-A-MOVE 2

PUBLISHED BY ACCLAIM - DEVELOPED BY TAITO



It always delights me to begin a review with a personal anecdote, so here we go: I've been playing Bust-A-Move since the original version came out for the coin-op NEO*GEO system. And lemme tell ya, I REALLY liked it, because the sadistic arcade operators put it smack-dab next to the beat-'em-ups in my local gaming establishment, forcing me to say "Excuse me, large testosterone-filled teenagers, but could you move aside so I can play the game where cute dinosaurs shoot colored bubbles at other colored bubbles?"

It thrilled me no end when Super NES and 3DO versions of Bust-A-Move were released last year ... no more coughing up fifty cents a game and no more sweaty, stinky Street Fighter maniacs rubbing up against me. (I really didn't need to take you there. Sorry.) The bad: neither version quite captured the coin-op feel. The good: the PlayStation now has Bust-A-Move 2, which has enhanced graphics, great sound, and hyped-up gameplay.

If your life has not yet been graced with the glory of Bust-A-Move, the gameplay is easy-peasy, Weezy. There's a "cannon" at the bottom of the screen that shoots colored spheres upward; you adjust the cannon's angle and fire away. When you connect three or more spheres

of the same color, they explode; any spheres connected ONLY to the exploding spheres drop off the screen.

In the one-player mode, you want to clear the screen of spheres; in the two-player mode, you want to screw the other guy by sending spheres to his side. That's done by exploding and/or dropping more than three spheres at once; every sphere after the third appears on your opponent's side. If you're still confused, just look at the pretty screen shots. Lord knows no one reads for comprehension anymore.

Now then. Bust-A-Move features three modes of play. The Puzzle Game is a one-player-only mode in which you choose your path through a series of levels that fan out in both directions from the starting point. (Imagine an upside-down pyramid, with you at the bottom.) After picking a path, you face five waves of ever-more-complex sphere patterns. Bust 'em all and it's off to the next path and the next five waves. Player Vs. Computer pits you against increasingly challenging computer opponents, with three levels of difficulty: practice, normal and hard, for Bust-A-Move studs or studettes only. (One of Bust-A-Move's keenest features is that it appeals to those nice-smelling creatures known as "women.")

The main event is Player Vs. Player, where two flesh-and-blood players go at it. Again, there are three levels: Practice, Normal, or Variety, which has stranger patterns and "power-ups" that, for example, make an entire color disappear at once. If you beat the mystery level in the Puzzle Game mode, you learn a code that lets you play the two-player mode as any of the characters from the Player Vs. Computer mode. Normally, you're stuck playing as dinosaur brothers Bub and Bob (formerly the stars of Bubble Bobble); with the code in place, you can be any of the wacky computer characters. Makes no

EX RATED

difference in the gameplay — it's just a visual and aural change of pace.

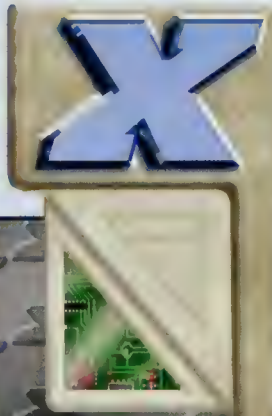
The graphics in Bust-A-Move 2 are underwhelming, with still-picture backgrounds and limited animation, but the colors are vibrant, and the graphics aren't so detailed that they interfere with the gameplay. There's also a very short 3D rendered animation of Bub (or is it Bob?) displayed just before the title screen, and I'm still trying to figure out why in <your-deity-of-choice-here>'s name it was included.

There's a decent number of musical tracks to keep you from going insane (as the ten-second music loops in most puzzle games did to me many years ago — can you tell?), but the sound effects will drive you insane with laughter.

Bust-A-Move 2 is filled with several dozen Japanese-flavored sound bites that make no sense and make me cackle with glee, every time I hear 'em. An example that won't translate well to print, but neither does my impression of Vinny Barbarino from "Welcome Back, Kotter": when you select an option from the main menu, instead of a simple confirmation beep, you get someone screaming "Ba-KAAAAAK!"

With its addictive gameplay and psychotic sound bites, I'd be a complete nutbar not to give Bust-A-Move 2 the coveted Gold X rating. Just remember that the two-player mode is the most fun—if you ain't got no friends, you won't be quite as entertained.

*Zach*



**THE BOTTOM LINE_**

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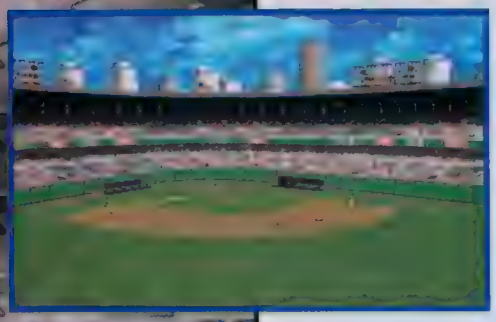
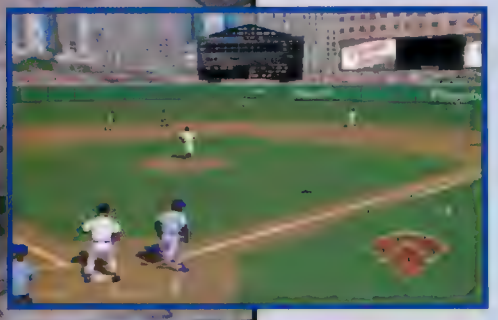
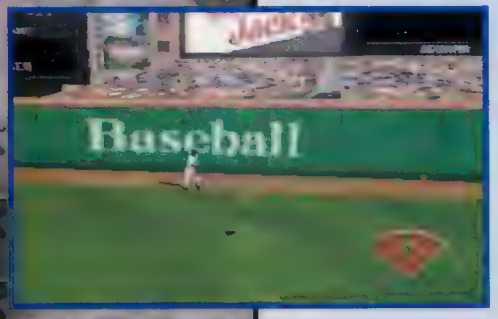
# BIG HURT BASEBALL

PUBLISHED BY ACCLAIM - DEVELOPED BY IGUANA







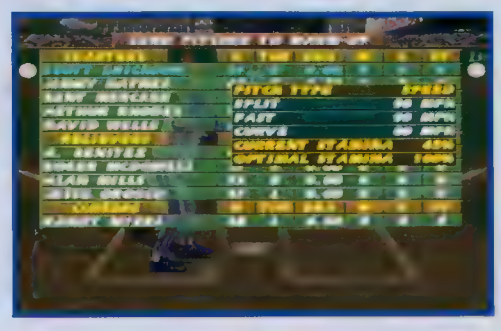

The name of the game is "Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball." After spending the last few days playing this game, "Big Hurt" would have been good enough. Acclaim and Iguana have expanded their sports lineup by offering one of the most frustrating experiences that I have ever had with a sports video game.

At first glance, things look pretty good: 3D, modeled stadiums, motion-captured animation, MLBPA license, season stat tracking, different camera angles, home run derby, batting practice, exhibition and season play — all of that good stuff that makes video baseball the enjoyable pastime that it is. Ah, but there is a nasty beast lurking inside.

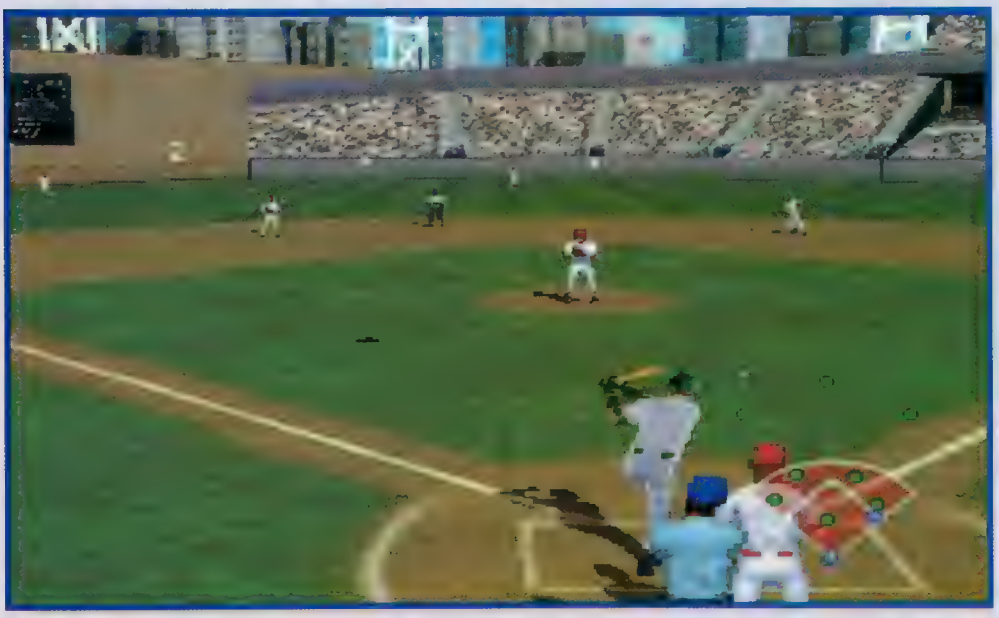
While my list of complaints with FT Baseball is long, the most annoying is the hitting mechanism — it doesn't exist. Pitchers can throw 95 mph screwballs (!?) and there is no skill involved in batting — you simply hit the button as the pitcher releases the ball. It is not possible to react to the pitch, you will end up swinging WAY late. For me, this takes almost all of the fun out of the game. I mean, what's the point in playing a game where the computer is making all of the moves. I literally played the game with one hand and my eyes closed. The end result was that sometimes I went deep, sometimes I didn't, some balls were pulled and some went to the opposite field. The bottom line is that I had little to no control over the proceedings.

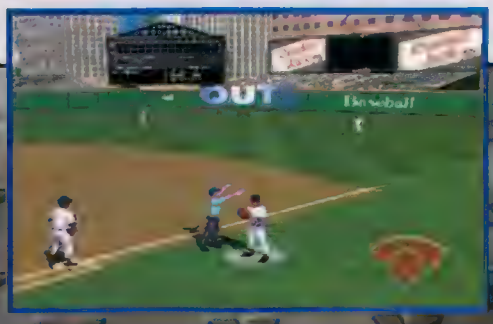
Other problems: Fenway Park is rendered in a most horrific fashion — the "Green Monster" is beige! And, the rest of the park is a series of concrete bleachers that have been positioned so that they try to recreate the asymmetrical nature of the ballpark. Even worse, there is a scoreboard floating in the middle of the monster! Compare this to Triple Play 97's rendition of Fenway — no contest. In addition, the play-by-play announcer has been created through the, now classic, piecemeal system — where pieces of sentences are put together so that, when read as a single statement, the sentence sounds like it is being read by an alien ..." The count, ONE ball and TWO strikes."

Other complaints include: the computer's seemingly random switching of active fielders (I have been playing the game with manual fielding and the com-




EX RATED






only two) and home runs that are announced and measured just as they leave the bat (kind of takes the mystery, drama and excitement out of the whole experience) and no instant replay feature. One final (small & weird) complaint is the barking of stadium vendors ... it's the same guy's voice all of the time and he has the same echo in his voice that the PA announcer has been given ("Hoooooot doooogs ... geeeet yooour reeeed hoooots") and it seems to be done to the tune of the old Armor Hot Dog commercial jingle ... strange days indeed.

The end result in Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball is that the design team made an attempt at creating TV-like presentation and very little effort at making a playable game of baseball. Big Hurt is the fifth baseball game to be released on the PlayStation and, if for some reason the other four fail to fulfill their obligations as playable games of baseball, Big Hurt will vault to the top of my list. Otherwise, rent and renter beware.

*Dave*

puter, in the middle of me running down a ball, will switch my active fielder for me!), no control over sliding, the Chase and Ground camera angles make fielding very difficult, generic batting animations (I have experienced

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

**89%**

**The end result is that the design team made an attempt at creating TV-like presentation and very little effort at making a playable game of baseball. Big Hurt is the fifth baseball game to be released on the PlayStation and, if for some reason the other four fail to fulfill their obligations as playable games of baseball, Big Hurt will vault to the top of my list. Otherwise, rent and renter beware.**

# PROJECT: HORNED OWL

PUBLISHED BY SONY - DEVELOPED BY MOVIC

It's surprising that it has taken this long for the first "true" gun game to come out for the PlayStation (no, Acclaim's miserable Revolution X does not even come close to counting.) What, with the success of Sega's Virtua Cop for the Saturn, last Christmas, and the imminent release of Virtua Cop 2, one would think it only natural that Sony develop similar hard-hitting product with which to compete. This is where Project: Horned Owl comes in (er ... sort of.) Developed by Sony Computer Entertainment of Japan, in conjunction with Movic, Horned Owl is the first title to actually make use of Konami's new light gun peripheral, the "Enforcer" (see the debut of this month's new section, Ex*cessory*, for the complete details.)

The premise behind Horned Owl is cool enough: in the future, the police take to the streets of Metro City, in huge, heavily armored mechanized suits, to protect the populace from hostile enemies. Enter Metallica, no not the heavy-metal band, a terrorist organization led by a cybernetic freak who has a penchant for destruction and a loathing for human-beings. It's up to you and your partner to rid Metro City of this scum before he obliterates everything and there's nothing left to protect and serve.

Being a self-admitted fan of Virtua Cop 1 and 2, as well as Namco's Time Crisis and Steel Gunners series, I was pretty excited to get my trigger finger around the Enforcer and start pumping away at the bad guys. So I plugged in the gun, booted up the game and aimed down the scope, ready to take on whatever they threw at me ... What ensued shortly thereafter, much to my dismay, was extreme and total disappointment. Instead of heart-pounding, sweaty-palm shooting action, I got this kind of easy-listening, sit-back, take-a-load-off-and-relax-a-while gameplay that just kind of chugged along at a slow and steady pace. Don't get me wrong, there certainly are some unique things about Horned Owl that make it interesting to play, at least once anyway. But, on the whole, this game just lacks any kind of intense excitement that normally accompanies this style of game.

Ok, before I go and totally tear the game to shreds, I should at least point out why Horned Owl recieved a Bronze rather than a Tin rating. For starters, the graphics are well-done, albeit sparse, successfully combining polygons with bitmapped sprites. There are five levels, in total, which are pretty long and you have to play the game on the hard difficulty level to get to the last two levels. The Enforcer works very well for the game, with pin-point accuracy. Besides the normal shots that you can

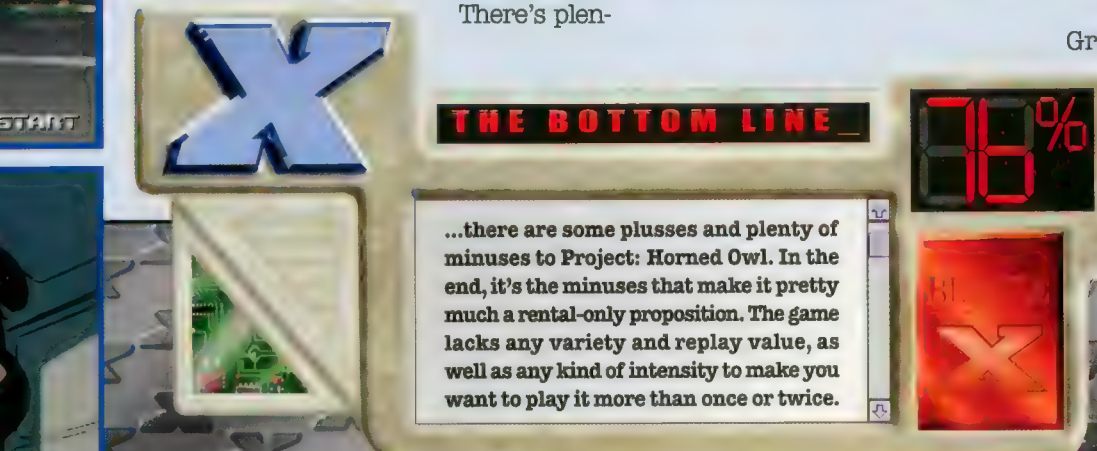
EX RATED

ty to shoot at, including interactive backgrounds, but you can't utilize them like Virtua Cop. Barrels explode, but they don't hurt any enemies that happen to be standing right next to them. In fact, you can't even kill civilians, what's up with that? Two players can play simultaneously and you don't have to play with the Enforcer, the mouse and control pads work just as well. The last thing worth mentioning is the animation cut scenes spliced in-between the levels which were done by the famous Japanese artist, Masamune Shirow, adding a nice touch to the flavor of the game.

As you can see, there are some pluses and plenty of minuses to Project: Horned Owl. In the end, it's the minuses that make it pretty much a rental-only proposition. The game lacks any variety and replay value, as well as any kind of intensity to make you want to play it more than once or twice.

Greg

fire, there are grenades which can be launched by pressing the extra button located on the back of the gun, as well as a charge option (similar to R-Type) which shoots a multiple burst of your ammo. There's plen-


THE BOTTOM LINE_
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78%

# TECMO WORLD GOLF

PUBLISHED BY TECMO - DEVELOPED BY SETA

Almost a year into the life of the PlayStation, there are only two golf games available, a sad state of affairs by any definition. But don't despair, help is on the way; with a couple new golf games set for release this fall, golf fans may finally have their appetite satisfied. Since I count myself as one of the gamers waiting to be satisfied, I was more than willing to dive right into Tecmo's new release, World Golf.

Tecmo World Golf takes you on a whirlwind tour of 101 golf courses scattered throughout Japan. That's right, I said courses, not individual holes. That's a whole lot of golf. I think I'm starting to feel a little full already.

You can choose from four male and four female golfers, as well as create your own player with abilities. With a memory card, you can save this Masters contender for posterity. The game seems to have packed in just about everything you could ask for in a golf game, the question is, will it translate into a playable title. My experience with sports titles that try to pack everything they can into the game, tend to lose a little in the gameplay category, and when it's all said and done, the most important aspect of any game, let alone a sports title, is the gameplay. So, without further delay, let's see how Tecmo tees up.

The first thing you'll notice about World Golf, is the very Japanese feel to it, your caddy even has a very thick Japanese accent. The fact that all of the 101 courses are in Japan might have something to do with that. Once you get into the game, however, other things start to grab your attention. First off, you'll probably spend more than a few minutes figuring out how to hit the ball, it takes five key strokes to get the ball in the air. Once you've figured it out, however, you'll realize the play mechanics are one of the better aspects of the game. On the bottom right of the screen, a shrinking red light covers a golf ball, the trick is to hit the ball right when the light shrinks to its smallest diameter. The smaller the diameter, the better the stroke, the larger the diameter, and you're eating divots for lunch. The putting mechanics are quite different,

EXRATED

however, and nowhere near as smooth. Putting is easily the most frustrating part of Tecmo World Golf, as it is very difficult to read the green. There is almost no difference in texture between the fairway and the green, making it virtually impossible to read any slopes or inclines.

Graphically, Tecmo World Golf gets mixed reviews. I like the 3D and real time approach, but the low polygon count reminds me of very early PC graphics. Additionally, you don't get a good feel for the boundaries, as they tend to blend with the rest of the scenery.

The sound is very 16 bit. The ball sounds like it's hitting a rubber mat when it lands on the fairway, and a tin can when it rolls into the cup. If every aspect of the game was as good as the driving mechanics, we would definitely have a contender. As it stands now, however, Tecmo World Golf delivers a much better game than US Gold's World Cup Golf, but falls way short of EA's PGA 96 and Interplay's VR Golf 96.

*Alex*

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

**If every aspect of the game was as good as the driving mechanics, we would definitely have a contender. As it stands now, however, Tecmo World Golf delivers a much better game than US Gold's World Cup Golf, but falls way short of EA's PGA 96 and Interplay's VR Golf 96.**

# OLYMPIC SOCCER

PUBLISHED BY U.S. GOLD - DEVELOPED BY SILICON DREAMS

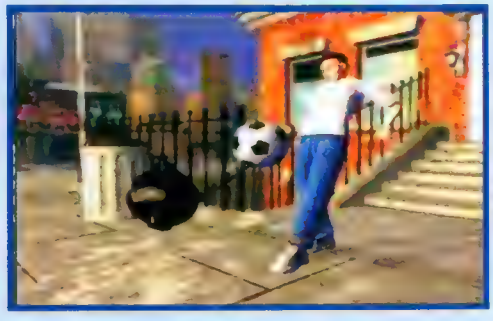
I'm tempted to spend the majority of my review responding to Mr. Off's nasty remark about my "marginal soccer skills", in the June '96 preview of this game, but I'm SO far above that. No, I'll use my precious word count on the task at hand: evaluating Olympic Soccer and comparing it to the other FOUR football games already available for the PS. (By the way, Greg is a big poopy-head.)

Like every other PlayStation soccer game, except the bit-mapped FIFA 96, Olympic Soccer uses polygon-rendered players. The gameplay is slow and strategic, meaning it's aiming for the same crowd as FIFA 96 and VR Soccer, not the fast-paced Goal Storm and Striker 96.

Let's jump right in and cover the stuff Olympic Soccer has that the other soccer games don't: #1. Lots of viewpoints. You can gaze upon the pitch from six different heights (from 20 degrees to 90) and from a horizontal, vertical or diagonal view, for a total of 18. #2. Four-player support. FIFA 96 does up to eight, and Striker 96 does four, but Goal Storm and VR Soccer support a mere duo. #3. A strong league construction mode, letting you throw together any combo of teams.

And now for the stuff the other soccer games have that Olympic Soccer doesn't: #1. User-friendly menus. Olympic Soccer uses a terrible, butt-ugly icon system that makes accessing any option a confusing chore instead of a quick tweak. #2. More teams. Olympic Soccer has only 33 teams (the Israeli team seems to have been added at the last sec), whereas Striker 96 has 38, VR Soccer has 44 and FIFA 96 has 237 (!). #3. Snazzy gameplay. FIFA 96 has fancy kicks and VR Soccer has a multitude of moves, but the players in Olympic Soccer just kinda run around and kick the ball. #4. Real players. Sorry, but I value the FIFA license and its real-life players over the Olympic license any day of the millennium.

Graphically, Olympic Soccer is neither all that nor a bag of chips. The heavily angular players aren't detailed or well-animated — the closer the view-



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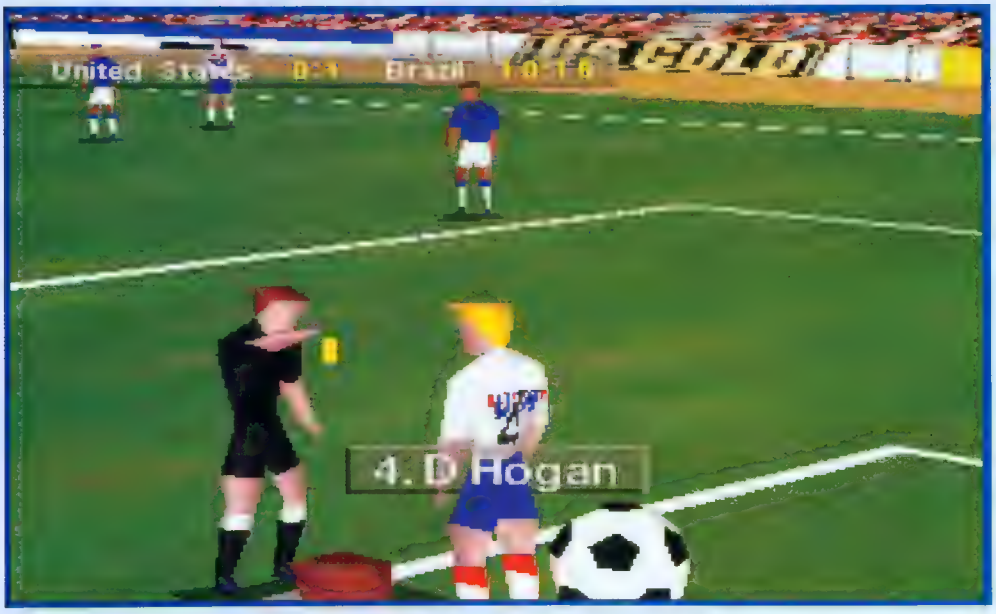
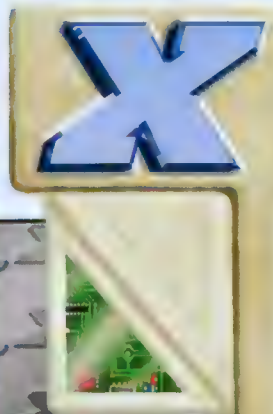


point of the field, the worse they look. (It also doesn't help that the closer views are less playable, since you have a much smaller "overview" of the field.) The 3D-rendered stadium looks okay, but you won't see it with most of the viewpoints anyway. The techno-drenched musical score isn't bad, but we all know that techno grates on one's nerves with the speed of ten crying babies on a transcontinental flight. The sound effects are sparse and plain, and even the commentator (as PS soccer games are required by law to have) seems a bit bored by it all.

Another entry into the ever-growing Bronze X category, Olympic Soccer just doesn't have the options or rewarding gameplay to complete with the offerings of Electronic Arts and Interplay. It might be worth getting if you're more into international teams than regional teams, but that would be a rather small, rather goofy segment of PlayStation owners. Will Psygnosis' upcoming Adidas Power Soccer be able to knock FIFA 96 from its lofty perch? To quote The Great Zachariah, the world's greatest hotline psychic: "Yes. Or maybe no. Eighty bucks, please."

*Zach*



**THE BOTTOM LINE**

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# JUMPING FLASH 2

PUBLISHED BY SONY - DEVELOPED BY EXACT

Last year, at the time the PlayStation was arriving on American shores, you couldn't pick-up a video game magazine without seeing some mention of Jumping Flash. The gaming press was all over this game like chili on a new tie. The game, without question, was one of the most critically-acclaimed titles of '95. A year later, we are lucky enough to find ourselves back in Robbit's world, with Jumping Flash 2, in all of its sequel-spectacular glory. Heed these words dedicated PS gamers ... DON'T MISS THIS ONE — IT'S ONE OF THE BEST AND MOST ORIGINAL GAMING EXPERIENCES YOU WILL HAVE THIS YEAR.

For those of you who have enjoyed the original title, you will be instantly familiar with the characters, style and play mechanics of JF2. For those who haven't, you are in for a treat. JF2 places you in the body of Commandeer Robbit, a robotic rabbit that is set to do battle with the evil Baron Aloha's minions over six different worlds and 18 levels (+ bonus stages) of first-person action/platform jumping and shooting action. The basic story is that Baron Aloha is bent on developing resort property (kind of like an evil Merv Griffin) and will stop at nothing to get it. In the original game, the bad Baron decided to make a daisy-chain of the six worlds of your planet and do a little homesteading ("squatting", to those of you in Oklahoma ... please, no letters). The difference in the sequel is that the Baron has convinced you that HIS planets are under attack and that he needs your help (never trust anyone wearing a monocle) to save his precious Muu-Muu's. You must battle across six, beautifully rendered, worlds — ranging from amusement parks to high-tech mechanical worlds, and traverse beaches, get shot through cannons and dive underwater. And the music is not to be missed, either — every level having a unique and appropriate musical score for the environment.

Jumping Flash 2 offers the player complete control over his environment. Players can look up, down and around, while jumping from platform to platform — with the intent of rescuing each of the 4 Muu Muu's populating each of the 18 worlds. Help is available in the form of energy power-ups, special weapons (you can carry three at a time), extra time (you have 10 minutes to complete each world) and more. The game designers have also helped us in our efforts,

EX RATED

by providing a radar map to help track down the Muu's and the level exit.

Like a Mario or Sonic, there is really no good way of defining what kind of game JF2 is — you simply must experience the amazing play environment.

The game is kind of kooky and a little easy (for my tastes, at least) but, like the aforementioned games, there is tremendous playability and an addictive quality to the game that will have you coming back long after you've beaten the game for the first, second or third time. In fact, the development team seems to have recognized this and, much like classic arcade games such as Pac Man and Robotron, they have given you reason to play the game again and again. After you beat the game the second time, you are given a third level to your super jump and, after beating the game a couple more times, you are given even more jumping power ... very cool! In addition, the Muu Muu's and other objects and enemies are moved around from the previous battle, adding to the depth of the game.

This one's a keeper, folks! For those of you who enjoyed the original game, you are going to love the sequel. And, for those of you that are new to the world of the PlayStation and Commandeer Robbit, we recommend Jumping Flash 2 as a must-buy ... you won't be disappointed.

*Dave*

**THE BOTTOM LINE_**

**99%**

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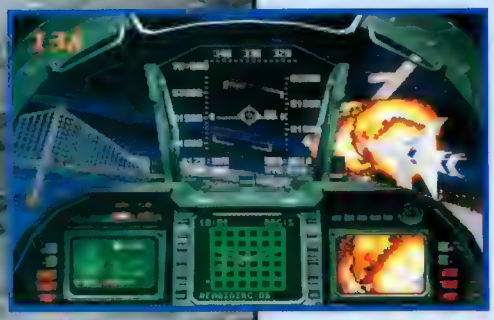
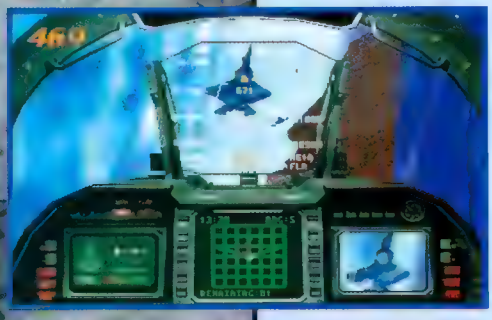
# BOGEY: DEAD SIX

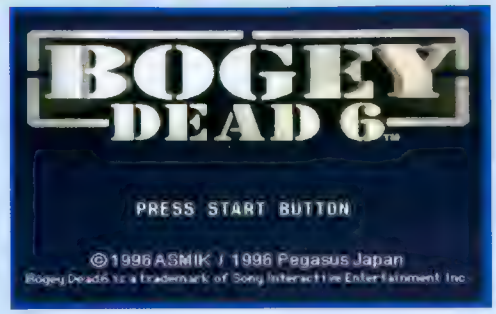
PUBLISHED BY SONY - DEVELOPED BY ASMIK/PEGASUS





So, what's in a name anyway? Lets face it, if our reviews were based on name only, Sony's latest title, Bogey, Dead Six would be a Tin game before we even got started. However, being the eternal optimist that I am, I decided to look past the name and give BD6 a thorough review. After all, you never know what you're going to get with console based flight sims. The true sims are generally produced for the PC, while console based sims usually wind up as arcade barn burners. The one notable exception was Namco's Air Combat, released late last year. Although, in no way could you consider Air Combat a flight sim, it did add some of the cockpit realism found in the PC games. Bogey, Dead Six has taken a page from Namco's book, and is looking to improve on the original.

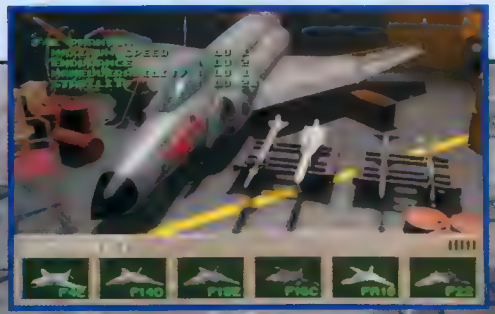
In Bogey, Dead Six, the action starts right away; there's no waiting around for fifteen minutes to get a glimpse of your first adversary. After you pick your mission, aircraft and ammunition load out, you're put right in the thick of it. The first thing you notice is that




the flight controls are far too loose; at times it feels like the plane is attached to wires just blowing in the wind. In car speak, this would be major over-steer. This makes it very hard to pursue your adversaries at high speed, since often it feels like the plane has a mind of its own. Additionally, you are provided with only one camera angle, which makes it very hard to see your complete field of vision (not a good thing for a pilot, whether it's an arm chair one or the real thing.) Probably the most disturbing visual aspect of BD6, however, is the limited sense of volume; you never really go anywhere in the plane, you just cycle back and forth.

Once you master the flight controls, and settle in to the minimal volume, the more positive aspects of the game take over. One of my biggest complaints with the current crop of flight sims is that there is little difference in missions. This is not the case with BD6. Most of the missions are very unique in character and landscape. The artificial intelligence is equally up to the task. Firing a missile as soon as you have a lock, isn't enough to take out a bandit. You

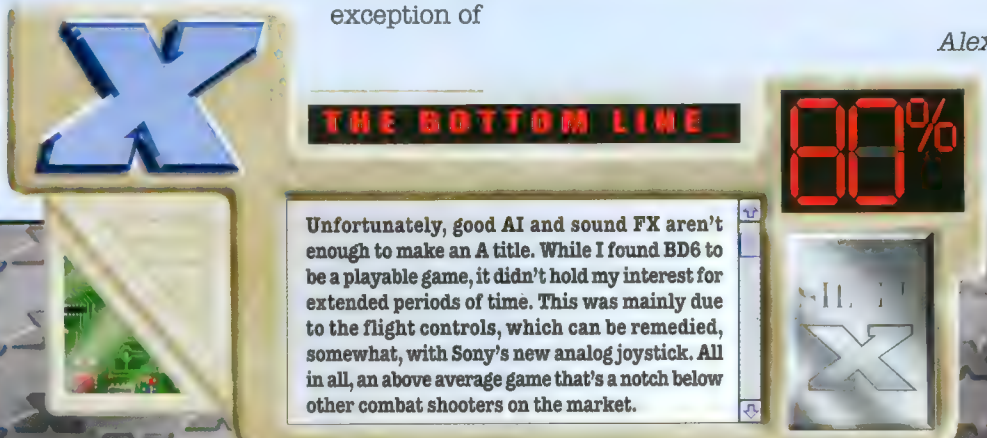
EX RATED



have to be at the correct angle for the heat seeker to pick up enough of a signal to get the kill. This is the way it's supposed to be, and it makes the game much more challenging. Also, the sound fx, with the exception of the machine gun noise, are excellent. The loud jet whine and the missile exhaust are almost too real. It's very easy to get lost in the sound.

Unfortunately, good AI and sound fx aren't enough to make an A title. While I found BD6 to be a playable game, it didn't hold my interest for extended periods of time. This was mainly due to the flight controls, which can be remedied, somewhat, with Sony's new analog joystick. All in all, an above average game that's a notch below other combat shooters on the market.

*Alex*


THE BOTTOM LINE
88%
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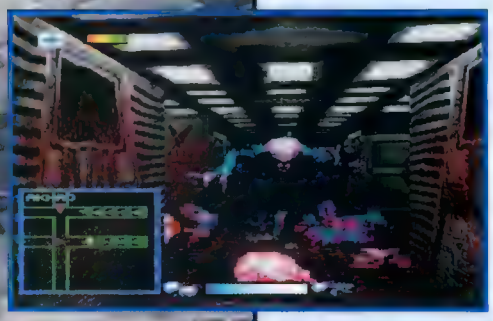
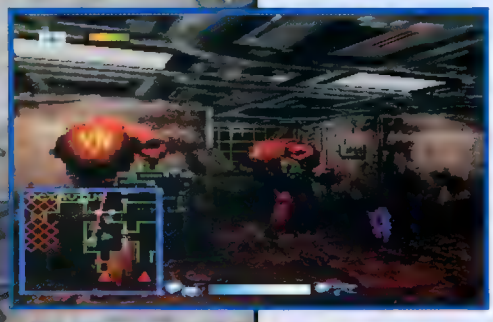
# SPACE HULK

PUBLISHED BY EA - DEVELOPED BY KRISALIS

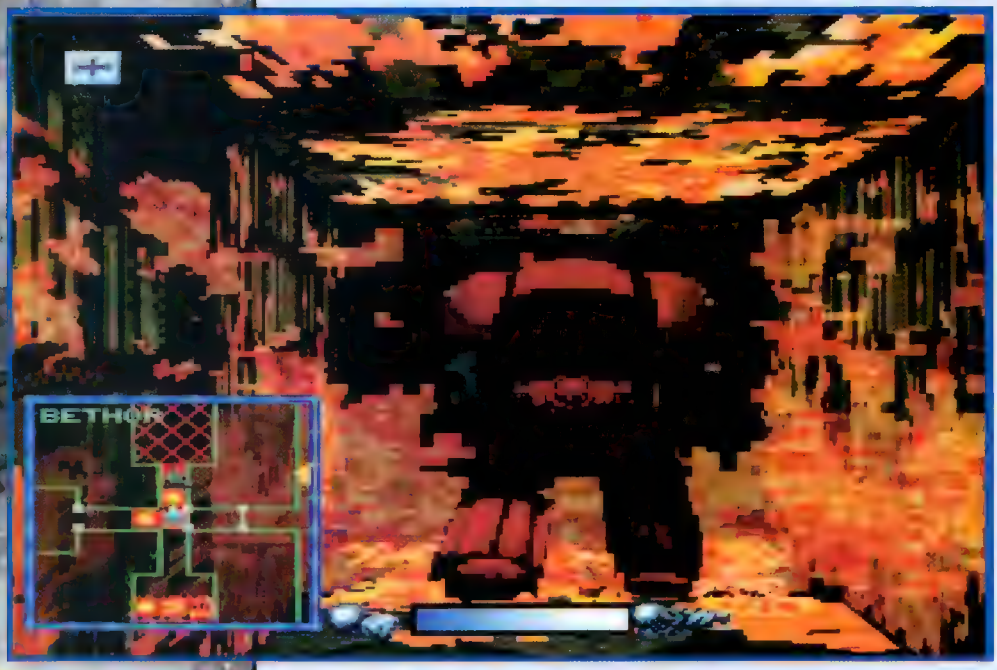




When the esteemed Dr. Gregory Off, mentioned he was mailin' Space Hulk my way, so that I might opinionize it, I exclaimed a hearty "No h-WAY!?" I had no idea that EA was working on a conversion of this well-received 3DO game released in mid-'95—but there it was, in my grubby little paws, via the magic of FedEx.

If you ain't familiar with the game, it's a first-person tactical combat sim-based on a popular British RPG. You lead an elite group of Space Marines, with the inspired name of The Terminators, into battle against Genestealers, a horde of evil beasties that infest derelict spacecraft called—that's right!—Space Hulks. It might look like a graduate of the DOOM School of Rootin'-Tootin'-Shootin', but Space Hulk is anything BUT a shooter—if you charge into a battle with guns blazing, you'll have several new holes ripped into your body within moments. Space Hulk is all about strategy and teamwork, not twitchin' trigger fingers.

To make your way through any one of the game's dozens of missions—which range from basic training to seemingly unbeatable scenarios—you need to take it slow, moving your Terminators in tight groups and constantly referring to the radar and map, choosing the best way to complete the mission with a minimum

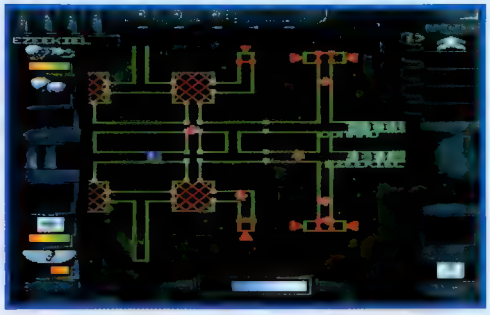


of Genestealer interference. As the missions get more complicated, the Hulks start throwing smarter and tougher creatures your way, but that's balanced by the more powerful weapons in your arsenal.

Space Hulk is NOT a game you can jump right into; it'll take you hours, before you start feeling comfortable with the interface and the controls. For some players, this is rewarding; for me, it's just frustrating. With a game this complex, there should be an in-game tutorial mission or a control reference screen or something to ease your gaming pain. No such luck, dude. You learn the hard way, by getting shredded into Kibbles 'N' Bits, over and over again.

You can't even pause the game to catch your breath, because Space Hulk uses something called "Freeze Time." When you pause the game to access the map and issue orders to your soldiers, Freeze Time goes down; when you're playing "live," it goes up. Run out of Freeze Time and you're forced to play in real-time, until it recharges. I know this is one of those gameplay-versus-realism design choices, but I would've dropped the Freeze Time or made it an option for advanced players.

Another flaw is that Space Hulk is REALLY hard; even the training missions will slap you upside the head, until you fling the PS con-



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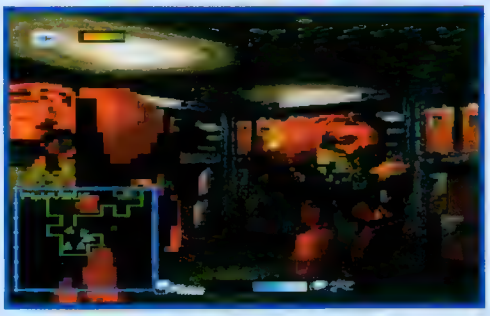
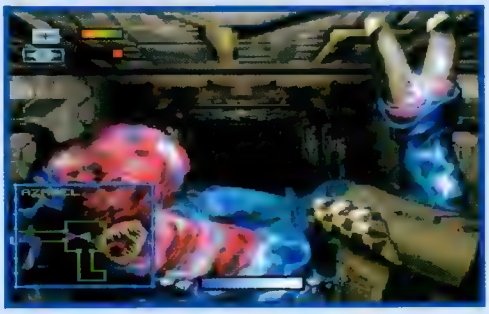


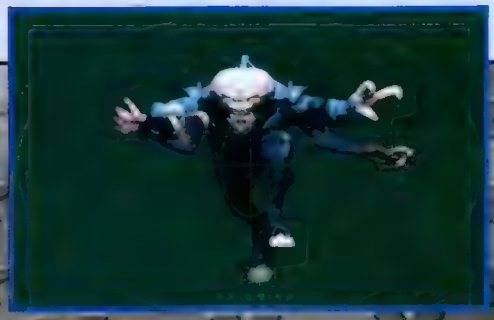


troller across the room in frustration. There's an adjustable difficulty meter, something the 3DO version didn't have, but who wants to wimp out that way? Nobody with a shred of self-respect. But, hey, at least you won't blow through Space Hulk in a day!

Space Hulk's graphics are fine and dandy; nothing spectacular, but nothing terrible. Some of the texture-mapped walls are rough and the animation is a little stiff, at least until a Genestealer gets right in your face for a bout of extremely annoying and frustrating hand-to-hand combat. The carnage factor is high, as Genestealers and Terminators explode into piles of gore and splatter blood on the walls. Eeww. The sound effects are excellent and atmospheric, thanks to constant radio chatter between the Terminators, who refer to each other by name, make comments about the current situation and scream like banshees when killed. (There are annoying loading pauses before some sound bites, though.)

With its often-confusing gameplay and its brutal difficulty level, Space Hulk isn't going to appeal to many PlayStation gamers under the age of legal alcohol consumption, and only a select group of gamers above it. There's not a single major flaw to which I can point: it's just the gameplay that leaves me cold, with too much work for not enough reward. If you're into action/strategy games, give it a peek anyway; it might just grow on ya.

*Zach*



**THE BOTTOM LINE**

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BONUS GOODIES

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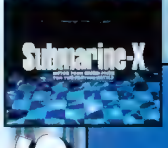


BONUS GOODIES

# MOTOR TOON GP 2

**SONY • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN**

First there was Motor Toon Grand Prix, one of the initial games to be released along with the Japanese PlayStation, way back in November of '94. Although the title was a great technological demo for the PlayStation's amazing capabilities, it had a distinct, cartoony Japanese flavor. Subsequently, SCEA decided, upon the US launch, that this title would not sell well in the American market. Whether it would or wouldn't have is now a moot point, because the sequel, Motor Toon Grand Prix 2, was recently released in Japan and is currently being considered for a state-side release. There's no doubt about it, as far as we're concerned, Motor Toon 2 is easily one of the most amazing games we have played this year, and everyone at the offices of Dimension Publishing, feels that it would be a crime if this title did not make its appearance in America.

What makes this game so special, is that it's more than just your standard, run-of-the-mill driving game. First off, Motor Toon's setup and presentation is similar to Super Mario Kart, in that you not only race against a cast of characters, attempting to finish in first place, but do battle, as well, via power-ups, shields and weapons picked up along the way. The various power-ups and weapons range from the standard temporary invincibility to magic mushrooms, which momentarily reverse your opponent's controls, to heat-seeking missiles. Once acquired, these are then executed by pressing the O button once, to start them automatically cycling, then pressing O once more to randomly stop the selection. What you get is determined by the power-up on which it stops. This adds a whole new layer of strategy to the game that is not generally found in most driving titles. Secondly, the characters are reminiscent of the old Saturday morning cartoon, Whacky Racers — each having their own attributes, such as handling and top speed, making the game extremely replayable by having to master many different cars. Speaking of replayability, MT2 has all sorts of secret hidden items, including extra characters, tracks and even games. That's right, hidden inside this incredible racer are three extra mini-games; from a 3D version of Battleship to a rendition of the classic coin-op, Battlezone, to an amazing 60-fps F1 driving game, thrown in as an after-thought. Who are these guys anyway? Another few features added to this title are the ability to link-up with another PlayStation for head-to-head competition (the import version actually comes with two copies of the game) and a replay feature which let's you record your race and then watch it from every possible camera angle imaginable, as well as race against yourself — kind of like a ghost car.

This article wouldn't be complete without mentioning the graphics, which are a marvel to behold. Each track is distinctly different in style and theme, ranging from the furthest reaches of outer-space to the toy-filled world of Gulliver's house. Amazing! I could go on about all of the spectacular effects that are packed into this game, but I'm just about out of space. I think the accompanying screen-shots should do the game justice. I sincerely hope Sony realizes what a gem this game is and chooses to release it in America sometime this year. Otherwise, many gamers will never have the pleasure of playing one the best driving games to date.

*Greg*

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# The PS*Extreme* Historical Ranking Chart

*EXCAVATE* is the section where we dig up the last six months or so of our old ratings and present them on one easy-to-read page, along with a little explanation/breakdown of our rating system. Use this as your buying guide throughout the year and as a reference for those older games that you might have missed (or wish you had).

| GOLD GAMES | ISSUE | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| NFL GameDay | December 1995 | 98% |
| Alien Trilogy | April 1996 | 97% |
| Resident Evil | April 1996 | 97% |
| Warhawk | December 1995 | 96% |
| NHL Faceoff | January 1996 | 96% |
| King's Field | Feb/March 1996 | 95% |
| Street Fighter Alpha | Feb/March 1996 | 95% |
| VR Golf | April 1996 | 95% |
| Fade to Black | July 1996 | 94% |
| Assault Rigs | January 1996 | 94% |
| FIFA '96 | January 1996 | 94% |
| The Need for Speed | April 1996 | 94% |
| Descent | Feb/March 1996 | 93.5% |
| Twisted Metal | December 1995 | 93% |
| Tekken | December 1995 | 93% |
| Doom | January 1996 | 93% |
| Thunderstrike 2 | Feb/March 1996 | 93% |
| Road Rash | Feb/March 1996 | 93% |
| Return Fire | April 1996 | 92% |
| NBA Shootout | May 1996 | 92% |
| Triple Play 97 | July 1996 | 92% |
| NHL Powerplay 96 | July 1996 | 92% |
| Defcon 5 | January 1996 | 91% |
| Dark Stalkers | Feb/March 1996 | 91% |
| Slam 'N Jam '96 | May 1996 | 91% |
| International Track & Field | July 1996 | 91% |
| PO'ed | April 1996 | 90% |
| Magic Carpet | May 1996 | 90% |
| Gex | January 1996 | 90% |

| SILVER GAMES | ISSUE | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| Loaded | December 1995 | 89% |
| Top Gun | July 1996 | 88% |
| Zero Divide | Feb/March 1996 | 87% |
| Bottom of the 9th | May 1996 | 87% |
| Hardball 5 | May 1996 | 87% |
| WWF Wrestlemania | December 1995 | 86% |
| Skeleton Warriors | July 1996 | 86% |
| Viewpoint | December 1995 | 85% |
| Primal Rage | Feb/March 1996 | 85% |
| Myst | April 1996 | 85% |
| NBA Jam: TE | December 1995 | 84% |
| NBA In The Zone | Feb/March 1996 | 84% |
| NBA Live 96 | May 1996 | 84% |
| Battle Arena Toshinden 2 | July 1996 | 84% |
| Off World Interceptor | December 1995 | 83% |
| Williams Arcade Classics | May 1996 | 83% |
| In the Hunt | April 1996 | 82% |
| VR Soccer | April 1996 | 82% |
| NFL Quarterback Club | April 1996 | 82% |
| Jupiter Strike | January 1996 | 82% |
| Robo Pit | June 1996 | 81% |
| Wing Commander III | June 1996 | 80% |
| Buster Brothers Collection | May 1996 | 80% |

| BRONZE GAMES | ISSUE | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| Floating Runner | July 1996 | 79% |
| Blazing Dragons | June 1996 | 78% |
| Cyberspeed | January 1996 | 77% |
| Criticom | January 1996 | 77% |
| D | May 1996 | 75% |
| Krazy Ivan | January 1996 | 74% |
| Shell Shock | June 1996 | 74% |
| Striker 96 | May 1996 | 74% |
| Theme Park | January 1996 | 73% |
| College Slam | May 1996 | 73% |
| The Hive | May 1996 | 73% |
| Philosoma | December 1995 | 72% |
| Zoop | January 1996 | 72% |
| Johnny Bazookatone | April 1996 | 72% |
| Cyberia | Feb/March 1996 | 72% |
| Final Round Golf | July 1996 | 70% |

| TIN GAMES | ISSUE | RATING |
|---|---|---|
| Space Griffon VF-9 | December 1995 | 68% |
| Cybersled | December 1995 | 55% |
| Alien Virus | April 1996 | 52% |
| Revolution X | April 1996 | 33% |

## WHAT DO ALL THOSE NUMBERS MEAN?

### 90-99%

"Must buy" games; only the best of the best get Gold. We stand behind these games.

### 80-89%

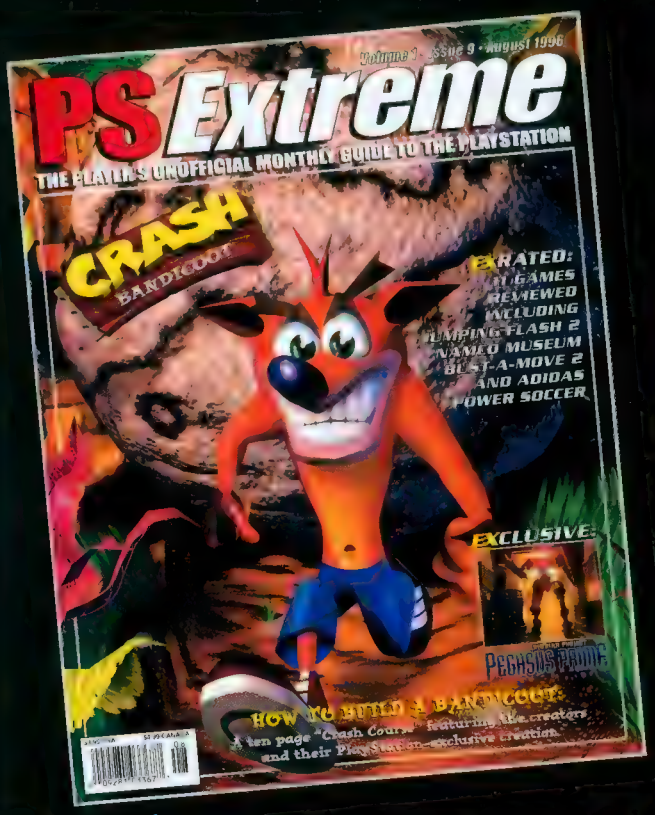
Great games, but lacking in some area; usually, for fans of that style of game.

### 70-79%

Mediocre titles that suffer from some serious flaws. Rent — don't buy.

### 0-69%

Tin games are to be avoided at all costs. Only die-hard gamers would buy these.


Volume 1 · Issue 9 · August 1996
PS Extreme
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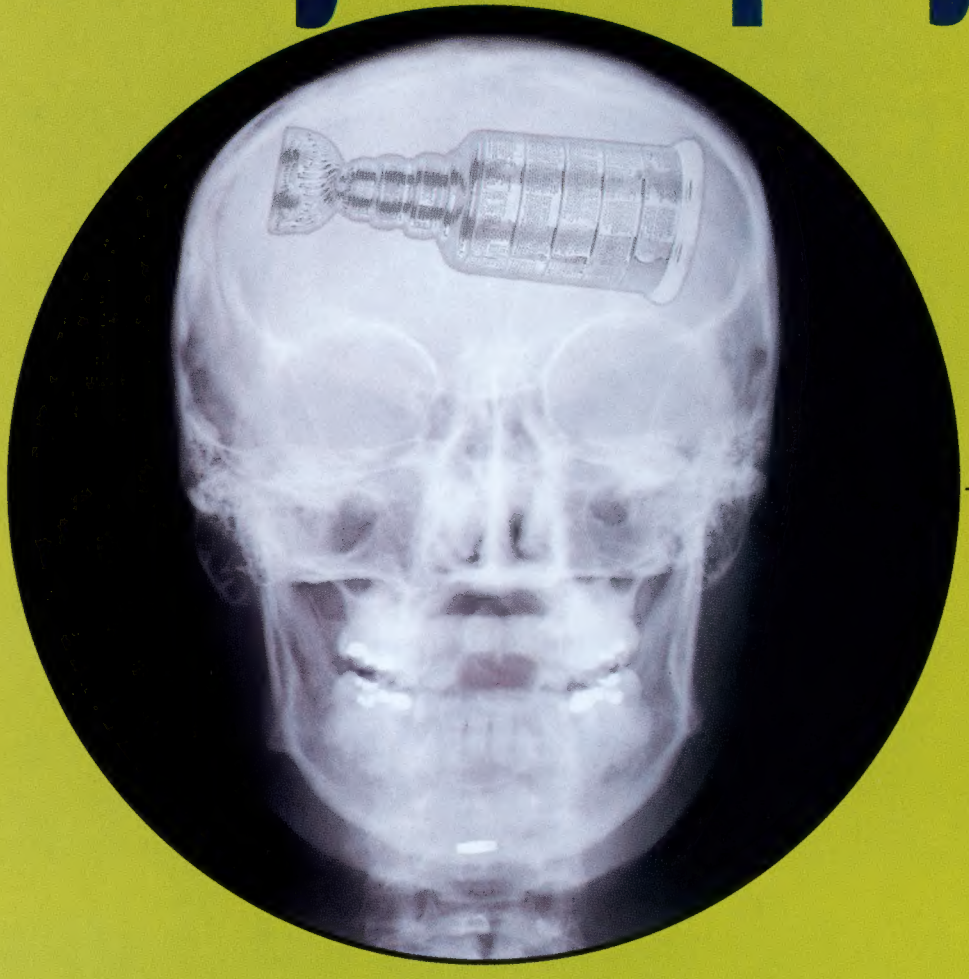

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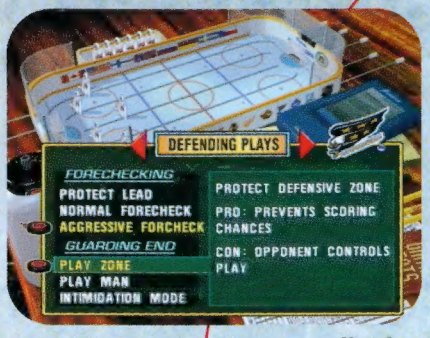


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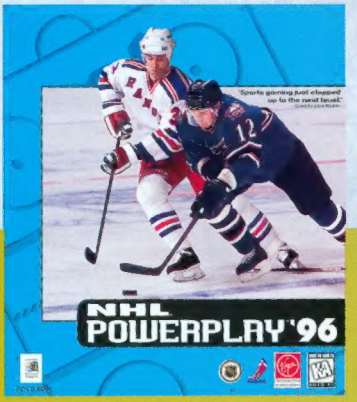


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